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TRAIN LIKE JAVIER GOMEZ

Lessons in racing from the 70.3 champ as he begins his coaching career

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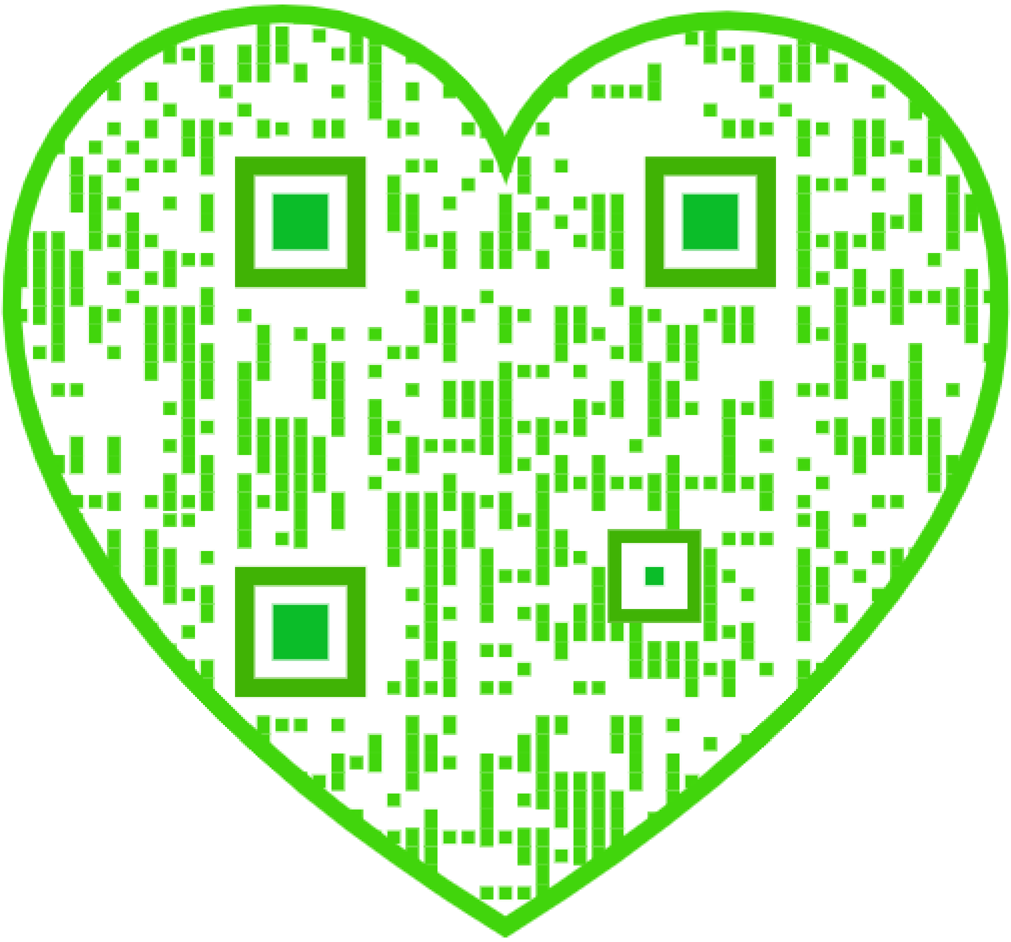

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How are you feeling about your race goals as the season gets started? Hopefully inspired and not overwhelmed!

FROM THE EDITOR...

Overheard at my swimming pool this week: two leisurely swimmers : "Busy this morning", grumbles one. "Yes," the other wisely nods. "All the triathletes are back!" Not that they've really been away over the winter months to be honest, but it did make me smile – and as a theme for this month's issue 'the triathletes are back' works pretty well! Yep, it's the time of year when the races entered in the off-season seem to suddenly be much closer and frantic scribbles on training plans try to factor in weeks left versus other life obligations, levels of fitness and (let's be honest) whether the challenges chosen from the sofa in January match our ability come May… Luckily from training tips via 70.3 champ Javier Gomez to easy ways to gain the edge in open water, there's plenty to help this month!

Santini
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Helen

Helen Webster, editor

TRIATHLON
TRAIN LIKE JAVIER GOMEZ
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We catch up with Spanish former pro Javier Gomez as he embarks on an exciting new chapter and coaching career

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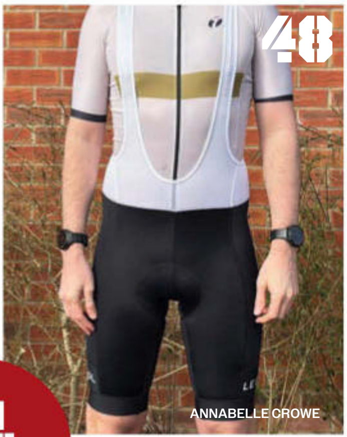

ANNABELLE CROWE

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DAVID PERKS

START

DIVE INTO THE WORLD OF TRI

World Triathlon
AIS
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AUS

World Triathlon
Z3R0D
AIS
GUIDE
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THE BIG PIC

Sam Harding and guide, pro middle-distance athlete Aaron Royle, compete at the World Triathlon Para Series Devonport, Australia, on 13-14 March. They were one of only two pairs to take part in the PTVI category, winning with a time of 1:02:38 and by almost 8mins ahead of Japanese athlete Ryota Kashiki.

DELLY CARR/WORLD TRIATHLON

BY_WOUT.PHOTOGRAPHER/WORLD TRIATHLON

QUINN ROONEY/GETTY IMAGES FOR IRONMAN

▲ Is it a concert? No, this is in fact a nighttime indoor triathlon, the T1 Indoor Triathlon World Cup Liévin, France, to be precise, on 22 March. In the centre you can see the pro male athletes lining up on the edge of the 25m pool to start their 200m swim; the track surrounding it where the 2.8km bike and 1km run take place. Victors were Henry Graf (GER) and home favourite, Olympian Cassandre Beaugrand.

◀ Reining half-Ironman champ Jelle Geens (BEL) started the year as he ended 2024, with a decisive 70.3 victory, this time at Geelong, Australia, on 23 March. Playing catch-up on the swim and bike, no one had an answer for his 1:07:58 half-marathon, winning with a time of 3:33:23. In the women's race, it was a first-time 70.3 victory for Natalie Van Coevorden (AUS) in 4:05:58.

▶ Alizée Paties en route to posting the fastest (30.2km) bike split of the day with a 1:27:27 at the Xterra Asia-Pacific Championship, in Dunsborough, Australia, on 30 March. The Frenchwoman would also register the top (10.5km) run time of 49:43 to take the overall win in 2:43:51.

▼ A dramatic day of racing ensued at Ironman South Africa, on 30 March, where Denmark's Magnus Ditlev destroyed the bike course record by more than 7mins with a 4:07:22 to win by 4:30mins over T100 world champion Marten Van Riel. The latter, in only his second full-distance race, also qualified for the 2025 Ironman Worlds. For the women, it was back-to-back IM victories for Anne Reischmann (GER) after winning November's Cozumel race.

XTERRA MEDIA

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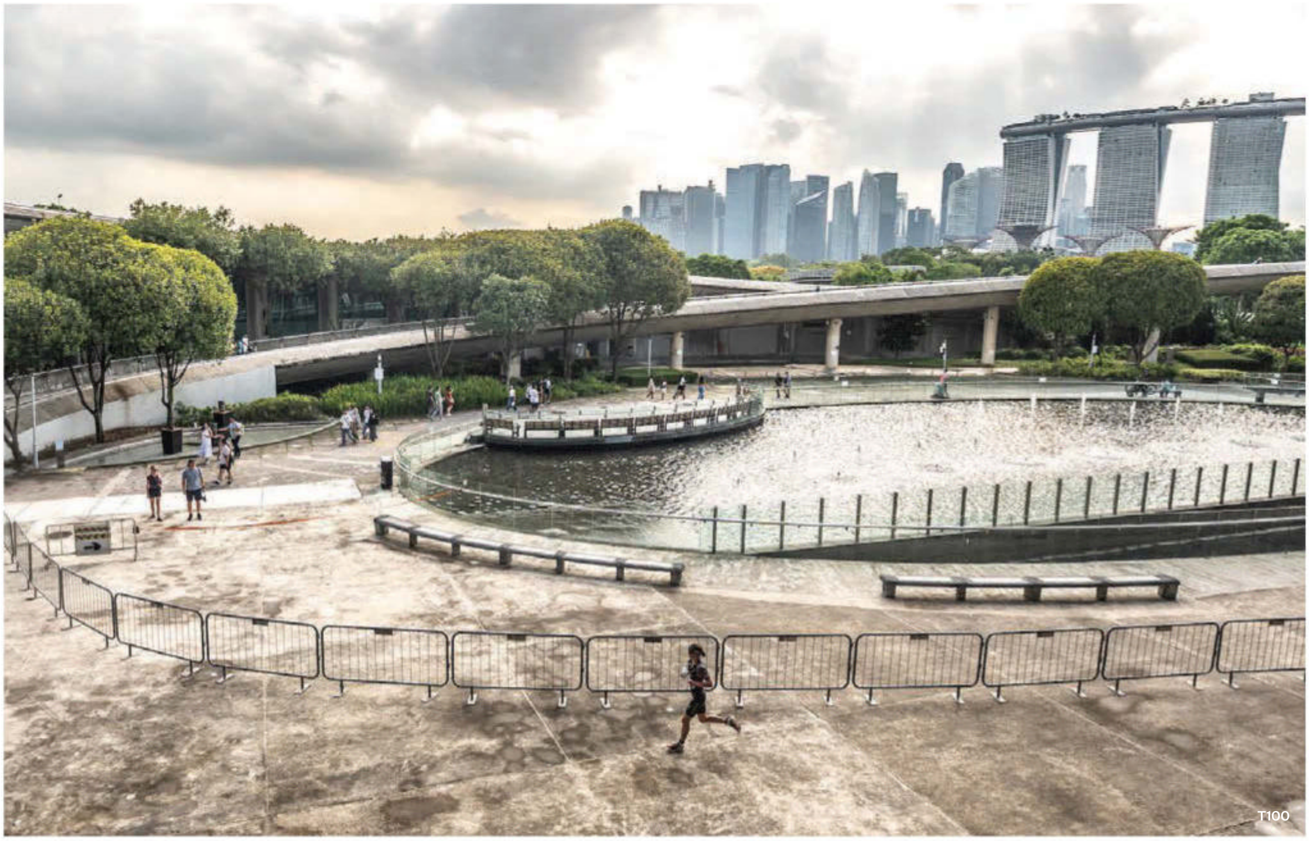
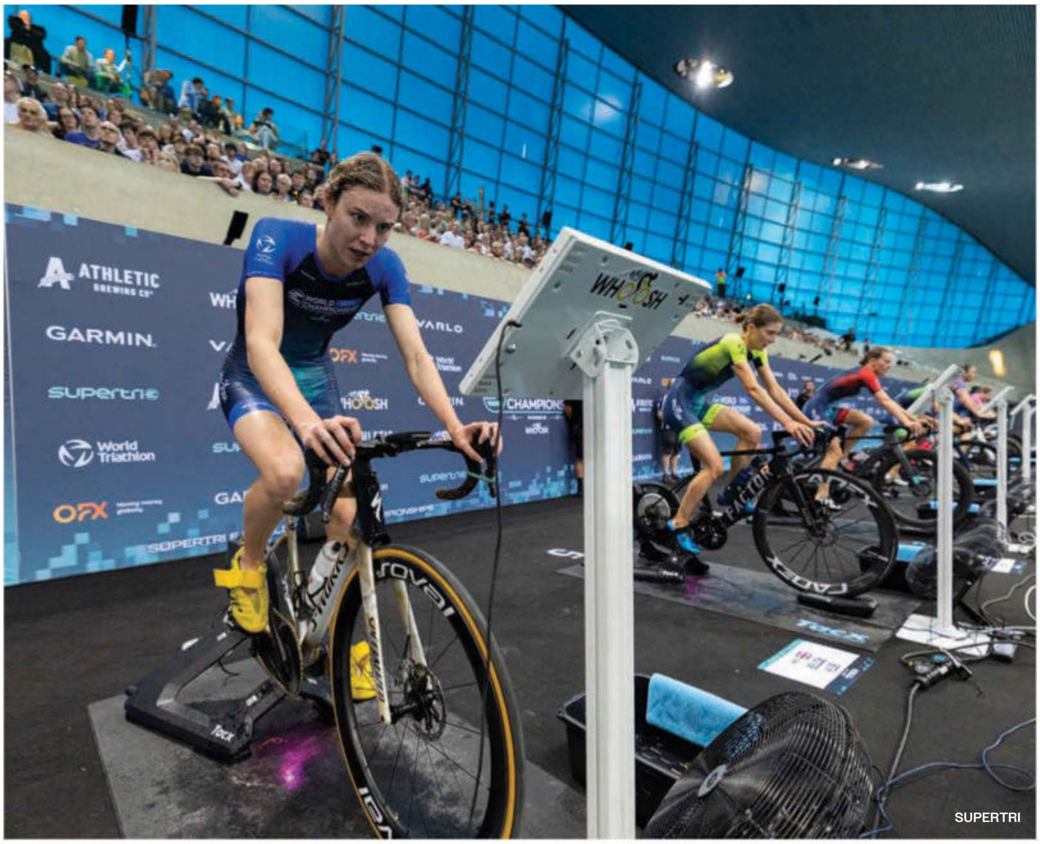


T100



SUPERTRI

▲ T100 debutante Kate Waugh, seen at the bottom of the image, completely obliterated the competition at the season-opener in Singapore on 5 April. The Paris Olympian clocked a 3:45:18 to win by 6:41mins ahead of wildcard Lisa Peterer (AUT) in second and GB's Lucy Charles-Barclay in third. In the men's race, Paris silver medallist Hayden Wilde was first across the line.

◀ It was another Beth-v-Beugrand showdown on 5 April, this time at the supertri E World Championship, in London. But it was the Paris champion who would lead from start to finish in the gruelling, back-to-back nine-discipline triathlon to take the title ahead of Potter. In the men's event, the fabulously named Maxime Hueber-Moosbrugger would make it a double French victory.

▶ The first-ever Challenge Sir Bani-Yas took place on 5 April in Abu Dhabi. Intense heat on the bike and run course proved the day's toughest challenge, but for the men's victor, Jonathan Guisolan (SUI), it was happy hunting ground: "I just love the heat. Mentally, it doesn't affect me". Aurélia Boulanger (FRA), another athlete who admitted to preferring the heat won in 4:22:07 for the women.

CHALLENGE FAMILY

▼ Ironman 70.3 Oceanside, on 5 April, may be the most thrilling race of the year. Kristian Blummemfelt (NOR) suffered a puncture, lost 14mins but then broke the run course record with a 1:07:19; Gustav Iden returned to the podium in third; pro cyclist Cameron Wurf was DSQ'd for speeding; Lionel Sanders took his fourth Oceanside victory; while Paula Findlay clocked her second course win.

5
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SOCAL TRIATHLON TEAM
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GETTY IMAGES FOR IRONMAN

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T100
TRIATHLON WORLD TOUR

ALEX POLIZZI

TRI WILL ALWAYS TURN TO PARTICIPATION

TIM HEMING
Cutting through the spin of tri to address the issues that matter, Tim is a sports journalist who has written extensively on triathlon for the national press.

The start of 2025 has been a reminder that while the pros might be important to organisations, it's the amateurs who deliver the profits.

STATE OF PLAY

The launch of the T100 series, the consolidation of supertri, plus World Triathlon, Ironman, Challenge and XTERRA… if you're an elite triathlete looking for a platform for your talents, there's never been more choice.

But while some of these organisations have become more bullish about showcasing professionals – luring triathletes with contracts, increased prize money and bonus pool payments – the start of 2025 has underscored a long-held truth about the sport: as certain as death, taxes and Donald Trump's tariffs, when it comes to swim, bike and run, participation is the only business model proven to work.

The Professional Triathletes Organisation was going to be different. It will maintain its focus on the pros and has committed to paying out over $8 million to athletes in 2025, but there is a notable shift. While its flagship T100 World Tour is retained for 2025, several of the sport's biggest names have opted not to take up contracts.

Yes, it shows the continued allure of Ironman world titles – but also that the PTO's investment is no longer focused solely on the elite. A recent rankings change also sees end-of-year prize money reduced from a $2 million pot to $560k.

The homepage of the T100 website is another clue – dedicated to the amateur and attempting to entice them to one of seven locations, two short of the nine the pros will race at. This is because the PTO doesn't own the events in San Francisco and Valencia, so can't offer age-group racing there.

The age-group side is being turbocharged this year in an attempt to make 100km the distance of choice. It's a format that, in partnership with World Triathlon, draws parallels with the established age-group representative racing we already have at shorter distances – except now, the 100km events serve as qualifiers for the final in Qatar.

After initially offering some cut-price entries, T100 is now aiming at the premium end, with fees of up to $595.

But it's not just the PTO. Supertri started out as a pro-only exhibition on idyllic Hamilton Island near Australia's Great Barrier Reef, but since the pandemic, it has steadily moved into mass participation. It recently acquired the Toronto Triathlon Festival and will hold its first Canadian event this summer as it tries to become the 'global leader' in short-course triathlon. It had already expanded its portfolio by acquiring two events in Texas, with its 2025 calendar now extended to six events – including stops in Chicago and Toulouse – and potentially more to come before the year is out.

To complement that, there's also supertri's E-racing scene. At the London Aquatics Centre on the first weekend of April, several amateur waves featured alongside the pro races. While there's the dangling carrot of a place in the Esports Olympics, its standardised formats allow for pool racing, turbos and treadmills to host simultaneous competition around the world.

Ironman, of course, knows its business model. It has long put participation first – and often faced backlash for limiting professional prize money as a result. The rise of the PTO has made it flex its financial muscle when supporting athletes who want to make a living from the sport, the launch of its Pro Series last year being a case in point. But don't expect the M-Dot brand to take its eye off its bread and butter. Tune into any broadcast this summer and you'll see the same familiar drive to push race sign-ups. The question is how much Ironman continues to invest in pros if the PTO's efforts eventually falter.

All of these organisations maintain that professionals form a key pillar of their business model. But the broadcast money just isn't materialising, and the financial reality in tough economic times is this: the customer who pays to race matters more than the one watching from the couch. 220

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WHY I TRI

"STAYING POSITIVE AND ACTIVE IS A PRIORITY"

With a diagnosis of young-onset rheumatoid arthritis, Izzy lane could have let her condition stop her. Instead, she's become a powerhouse of sport, training others and achieving her own fitness goals.

IZZY LANE

Izzy Lane, 28, is a personal trainer and triathlete from the Cotswolds who is passionate about getting her local community more active. Aged 19, Izzy received a diagnosis of young-onset rheumatoid arthritis, but is determined not to let the condition be life-limiting.

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune condition which mainly targets joints and leads to pain and swelling. It's not entirely clear what triggers it but it can be exacerbated by things like stress, and sometimes exercise can add to the soreness. It often comes on later in life, but can affect younger people too and flare-ups can make it particularly tricky to deal with. I have to inject medication weekly and have infusions in hospital every six months. It could be a barrier to exercise, but for all-round health and wellbeing, staying positive and active is a priority.

Coaching is a lifelong vocation and we never stop learning. I've earned my triathlon, swimming, netball and rugby coaching qualifications. Alongside my degree in Sports Education and Coaching, they haven't just given me a broad knowledge base, but helped hone my delivery of sessions to maximise the engagement and fun.

I also run first aid courses in the local community. Teaching people resuscitation techniques and what to do in the case of an emergency. Thankfully, incidences are rare, but when they do happen, particularly in remote rural locations, that knowledge can be lifesaving. We're increasingly learning the power of the defib.

LPS EVENTS
FINISH
NCTR

"If I had advice for anyone dealing with rheumatoid arthritis, it would be to treat yourself kindly. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to do things"

It might be where I live, but getting the local WI group, mostly retired women, active is one of my favourite parts of the week. A lot of what we do is focused on strength and conditioning in the gym where I work. It's a window to our future selves and shows the importance of keeping ourselves strong and mobile if we want to enjoy life as we age.

My first triathlon experience was in 2019, after completing a couch to 5k program early that year, I wanted to try triathlon and remember smiling the whole way through it, and weirdly wanting more. I completed the Cotswolds 113 a couple of years ago and plan to return this summer looking for a faster time. The lakes at Ashton Keynes are a location that a lot of British triathletes will know well. From evening mini tri series to end-of-season team relays, they offer some great opportunities to dip your feet in the sport.

I recently completed the Paris half-marathon. It was drama-packed because of the bomb scare closing the Gare du Nord. The event itself was tough. I'd had a flare-up of RA that has impacted my training so I revised the goals to make sure I could jog consistently for the 13.1 miles.

I'm moving more into event organising. Local, affordable and well-run events are the lifeblood of sport, and I really enjoy the organising process. It's fab when people sign up for Ironman, but let's help build the pipeline to get them there first. I've also been organising long-weekend tri camps in the UK.

If I had advice for anyone dealing with a RA diagnosis it would be to treat yourself kindly. It can be frustrating when you feel unable to do the active things you want to, but often you'll find there are other angles. It's partly why triathlon is such a great sport. Running might be tough at times, but there's always the bike and the pool to opt for. Most importantly, keep a smile on your face while you're doing it. 220

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CHALLENGE FAMILY

BEST OF BRITISH

From almost quitting the sport to finishing the 2024 T100 season in eighth place overall, India Lee's last 12 months have been transformative, to say the least. We caught up with the top Brit just before she flew to Singapore to talk health, wealth and whether Kona is for her or not...

INTERVIEW
LIZ BARRETT

IMAGE
CHALLENGE FAMILY

India Lee has raced almost every major race series that tri has to offer – World Triathlon, 70.3, Ironman, Challenge and T100. But it's in the latter, the Professional Triathletes Organisation's new-for-2024 format, where the 36-year-old Winchester-born pro has found her home.

In the first race of the new series, Lee was the surprise winner. But the result proved to her that "anyone can have their day". Yet despite the overall success of her inaugural season, and being one of the more versatile British women in multisport, it wouldn't turn out to be Lee's day at her first-ever Ironman World Champs, in Nice in September, where a DNF has left her with some, potentially, unfinished business.

But right now the focus is 100% T100, with Lee talking to us just two weeks before her first race of the year in Singapore, where again she was hoping for a better outcome from 2024, having toed the line still recovering from a chest infection. (Sadly it would be another DNF in 2025, as illness once again interrupted her progress.)

220: How's your off-season been?
India Lee: It was great, thank you. I had a good chunk of time off in December – a combination of planned end-of-season/year break and a couple of bouts of illness.

I started training 'properly' again in January, kicking the year off with a training camp in Lanzarote with a small group of friends. The latter part of January I was in Loughborough with my coach, Sam Proctor, doing some heat prep protocol testing. Then we went back out to Lanzarote for a longer stint of three weeks to get some more quality work done.

220: How was your first session back? When was it and what was it?
IL: My first session back (after a few weeks of aerobic work) was a hills session at the start of January – 10 x 1min hill with a jog back down. The first few sessions back always make me question if I will ever feel race fit again. It felt a long way off at that point!

220: Sum up your first season in T100?
IL: It went a lot better than expected. Starting the year with a win [in Miami] meant that it was going to be a successful season for me no matter how the rest of the year panned out. I've really enjoyed the race format and competitiveness of the races. Each one has been a different dynamic, with the variety of courses and conditions offering something different each race.

220: Did you have a particular favourite course?
IL: I really enjoyed Ibiza. I love non-wetsuit sea swims, the bike course was fast but rolling, and the run was through the old town with lots of twists, hills, and the atmosphere created by the supporters was amazing.

220: How do you feel you've evolved as an athlete over these last 12 months?
IL: I'd say I'm generally much stronger all round. I have more confidence in myself and my ability. That has come from surrounding myself with the right people who believe in me and allow me to thrive.

220: With one season under your belt, what if anything will you change for the 2025 season?
IL: My main goal is to stay healthy. My Achilles' heel is illness; last year my biggest downfall was getting sick too often and at the wrong time. I showed when I was fit and healthy I was competitive at the front of the T100 races. Training-wise I'm just building on what we did last year, no major changes. But the biggest priority is consistency and staying healthy.

12-year career

In India's career so far, she has raced almost every tri format available. Here are her best results:

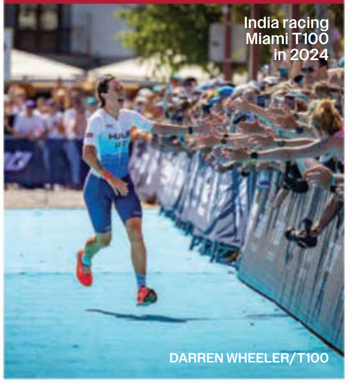
8th, 2024 T100 standings

2 x Challenge 'The Championship' winner (2023 & 2024)

1st, Miami T100 2024

3 x Ironman 70.3 winner

2016 European triathlon champion



India racing Miami T100 in 2024

DARREN WHEELER/T100

"Starting the year with a win [in Miami] meant that it was going to be a successful season for me no matter what"

MIAMI
T100
WORLD TOUR
HUUB
LEE
PTO
3

India winning the first T100 race in Miami, 2024, a result which she said "showed that anyone can have their day and you shouldn't write anyone off"

JAMES MITCHELL/T100

INDIA LEE

India competing at her favourite course – Ibiza T100, where she would finish third. "I love non-wetsuit sea swims, the bike course was fast but rolling and the run… lots of twists and hills"

DARREN WHEELER/T100

> *"It took 24 hours to process the disappointment. I got on a flight home the evening of the race and saw my family and my dog and then felt human again"*

220: What are you most looking forward to about the new season?
IL: Racing the new roster of athletes that have come into the T100 – lots of Olympic-distance athletes are stepping up and I think that's going to change the way the races go, so I'm excited to be part of that. Everyone is on my radar, though. I think there are the obvious few at the top of the rankings who will always perform well, but my result in Miami last year showed that anyone can have their day and you shouldn't write anyone off.

220: What's your schedule looking like for the year?
IL: It's mainly based on the T100 series, with a 70.3 in April to try and qualify for the Marbella 70.3 World Champs [on 8 November]. Then TBC on an Ironman in June. I'm going to see how the first few races go, and whether I have the courage to try [qualifying for the Worlds] again. I have some scars from Nice that I still need to get my head around.

220: Any answers as to what happened in Nice [Lee pulled up just before the 5-mile mark on the run]?
IL: Yes, I knew exactly what happened in Nice while I was racing. I was terribly homesick and emotionally exhausted. I had spent too much time away from home and family before the race, thinking I was preparing to my absolute best for the World Championships. But I just overdid it. Not the training, just the time away from my core support crew.

It took 24 hours to process the disappointment. I got on a flight home the evening of the race and saw my family and my dog and then felt human again.

I was frustrated with myself with the situation. I knew that I like being at home, but I was also trying to get to the start line of the World Championships in the best condition possible. Anyway, it's a lesson reinforced for the future.

220: Tell us how important getting

that T100 contract was for 2024?
IL: It was massive for me. Halfway through 2023 I was preparing to stop triathlon because I couldn't afford to continue. I wasn't getting the results and I wasn't enjoying it. I was training very well but I would fall apart in races because I was putting too much pressure on chasing a result.

When the T100 tour was announced, I thought that would be my opportunity to have another year in the sport, so I entered the last Ironman of the year, Florida, to try and get enough points to climb the rankings to the top 16 and get a contract for the 2024 season [Lee finished second]. I just scraped in and that changed everything for me. It gave me some financial security where the result of a race didn't matter as to whether I could pay bills that month. The contract meant I could go away on training camp to prepare properly and also buy some much needed equipment.

220: If you had had to quit, what would you have done instead?
IL: A lot more coaching!

220: You've had a fantastic run of success across all formats, is it safe to say T100's your favourite?
IL: T100 has been my favourite format so far. I enjoy it because being a better swimmer actually counts with the faster Olympic-distance swimmers coming into it; the bike is a 20m draft rule so it's fairer; and the run is a little shorter than 70.3, which I prefer with that being my weakest discipline. I've had good experiences in the other race formats, too, but for some reason the competitiveness of the T100 really appeals to me.

220: How has your short-course career helped prepare you for T100 racing?
IL: There are lots of skills that I learned in short-course racing that I've been able to use in the longer races, which if you go straight into 70.3/Ironman racing you just don't get the chance to develop. Particularly in the swim and transitions. Swimming in a pack/getting round buoys quickly is something that's really important in short course. As well as fast transitions. But then racing Ironman also teaches you the importance of fuelling and pacing because if you get it wrong, it really shows. I feel fortunate to have been able to experience a lot of different scenarios, and if I've got something wrong in the past I really try to learn from it.

220: Back in 2022, we asked you what motivates you to swim, bike and run every day. You replied: "I don't think there is just one thing. Some days it's because it's my job and I have to do it. Some days it's because I absolutely love it and there's nothing else I'd rather be doing. Other days it's a combination of both." Is that still applicable in 2025?
IL: I'm in a much healthier place psychologically than I was in 2022. Something I can only identify with hindsight. I feel so so fortunate to be in the position I am and I love that I get to call triathlon my 'job'.

220: You were also just about to race your first Ironman, in Israel, and you said: "Saying I'm looking forward to it is maybe a bit of a stretch. I go through waves of being super excited then terrified thinking it's so far and I can't cope." How do you feel about the full distance now?
IL: It's still daunting to me! I did Israel to tick a box – I went into it wanting to come away having had a good experience and to want to do another. Then in 2023 I did Ironman Florida, I went into it much better prepared and wanted to be more competitive. Which I was and, again, I loved it. I do have a strong desire to race Kona, whether I try for that this year or next year, I'm not sure yet. **220**

HUUB
101 - 145

In May 2024, Lee successfully defended her Challenge 'The Championship' title with a time of 3:56:45, breaking her own course record by more than 2mins

A day in the life of a pro

India Lee shares a typical Monday, which for the T100 pro is a recovery/aerobic day

6:45am: Wake up, let [pet dog] Ziggy out for a sniff round the garden while I make a coffee. Then go back to bed with coffee, Ziggy and a slice of Madeira cake

7:30am: Drive to the pool

8am: Run 60mins easy but hilly from the pool

9am: Coffee and a cinnamon bun from a coffee shop

9:30am: Swim - 4.5km mixed intensity set

11am: Stop at cafe on the way home from pool for a breakfast burrito and green juice

12:30pm: 90min nap

2:15pm: Make a coffee and have some toast

2:45pm: Ride 2hrs steady. Have an OTE Anytime flapjack bar, with fruit squash in bottles

5:30pm: Chill out watching a bit of YouTube, answer emails, write some training, catch up on admin etc.

6:30pm: Dinner - chicken, salad and a baked potato

7pm: Watch some Netflix while chucking a tennis ball for Ziggy

8:30pm: Go to bed

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

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Need some training and racing inspiration? Or fancy signing up for your first race in 2025? Whatever your targets, our one goal here at ***220 Triathlon*** magazine is to make sure you achieve them. In every issue we bring you the best training and racing advice, as well as all the cutting-edge kit you need to perform at your optimum. And, for a limited time you can try your first six issues for just £19.97!

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Helen

Helen Webster, Editor

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GOMEZ 2.0

He may have hung up the tri-suit for good, but as one of the sport's greats Javier Gomez is now hoping that some of that star power will rub off on the next generation as he moves into phase two of his career: the pro coach. We caught up with the legend of tri to talk role reversal, Olympic regrets and what he says needs to change in WTCS racing...

WORDS LIZ BARRETT **IMAGES** GETTY IMAGES

▶ Favourite for gold, Gomez would finish an agonising fourth at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing behind Jan Frodeno, Simon Whitfield (hidden) and Bevan Docherty

GOMEZ ESP
FRODENO GER

Last year was a watershed moment in the history of triathlon, as three of the biggest names in the history of the sport called time on their illustrious careers – five-time Ironman world champion Daniela Ryf, two-time Olympic gold medallist Alistair Brownlee, and five-time world champion Javier Gomez.

Gomez and Brownlee's departures in particular signalled the end of a golden era for the sport. For the generation who grew up with these titans of tri – this writer included – their absence still smarts. But, as the wise Dr Seuss once said – and as Brownlee paraphrased in his retirement post – 'Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened.'

And today we're positively beaming as Gomez pops up on our screen, speaking to us from Pontevedra, his hometown and base for his newest, and somewhat pressure-filled, project – coaching the Spanish junior tri team to glory at the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games.

Gomez remains Spain's only Olympic triathlon medallist. Alberto Gonzalez Garcia finished eighth in Paris last year, but there's been no hardware since 2012 when Gomez took silver in between the Brownlee brothers in London's Hyde Park.

"You know, Spain isn't the UK or other countries with way more investment in the sport and way more people doing sports," admits Gomez. "I think we have a pretty good team, but it's not realistic expecting to get medals at every Olympic Games. We have to work towards that and try to improve at every level.

"The federation is doing a good job and we have some young juniors with potential to do good things in LA and Brisbane, but they need a lot of work and understanding as to what is required to perform at the highest level, and that's what I'm trying to help with."

The 41-year-old's new role isn't just lip service, it's an at-the-poolside-each-morning position. As is fatherhood – Gomez's daughter Olivia, with wife and former pro Anneke Jenkins, arrived at the end of 2022 – which is why he took the job on the condition that the whole team would move to Pontevedra, where Gomez was also based throughout his career.

"I'm still figuring out how this is going to be my life," admits Gomez. "We've been on two training camps and then I went to New Zealand, so it's only in the last couple of weeks that we've finally settled at home here and started with the group. I don't see it as a job really, I'm doing what I like to do. It's actually a privilege."

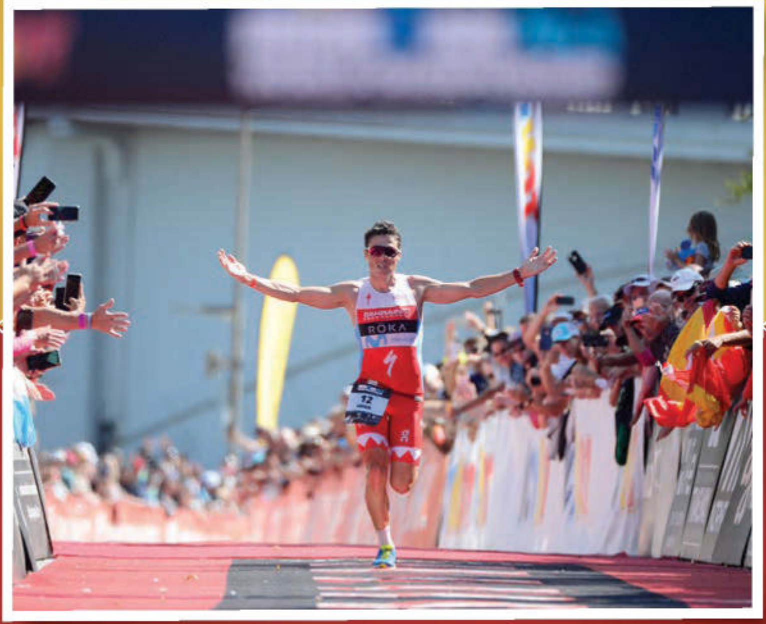
And how is the 'old-timer' keeping up with athletes most of whom are half his age?

"I'm actually still quite fit, so I train with them quite a bit, especially running and cycling. I can keep up with them."

OLYMPIC LEGACY

Of course Gomez isn't the only great Spanish tri export. His good friend – and now also technical ▶

▼ In 2017, in Chattanooga, Tennesse, Gomez claims his second 70.3 title to add to his one from 2014



▶ The rivalry between Gomez and the Brownlees did wonders for the sport, and no more so than at the London 2012 Games, where the Spaniard took silver between Alistair with gold and Jonny with bronze

advisor for the Spanish tri federation – Mario Mola won three consecutive world crowns from 2016-2018, with the pair ensuring that Spain held the title for an incredible six straight years. A feat yet to be repeated.

But all national federations are acutely aware that such pairings are rare, requiring a lot of stars to align. So instead, the day-to-day task of reaching these lofty goals requires doing it the old-fashioned way – hard work, sacrifice and dedication to the job. Hence Gomez's involvement, one of the sport's toughest athletes and one of the very few to be able to take the race to Alistair Brownlee, considered by many – including Gomez – to be the greatest short-course athlete that's ever lived.

Gomez may have won more world titles than the Brit, and anyone else in fact, but on the Olympic stage Alistair was nigh-on untouchable. Yet, cruelly, we were only treated to one real Gomez-Brownlee Olympic battle, in London. For the Spaniard, the Games bring up mixed emotions.

"The thing with the Olympics is that there are way more disappointments than happiness. There are simply too many people for only three medals.

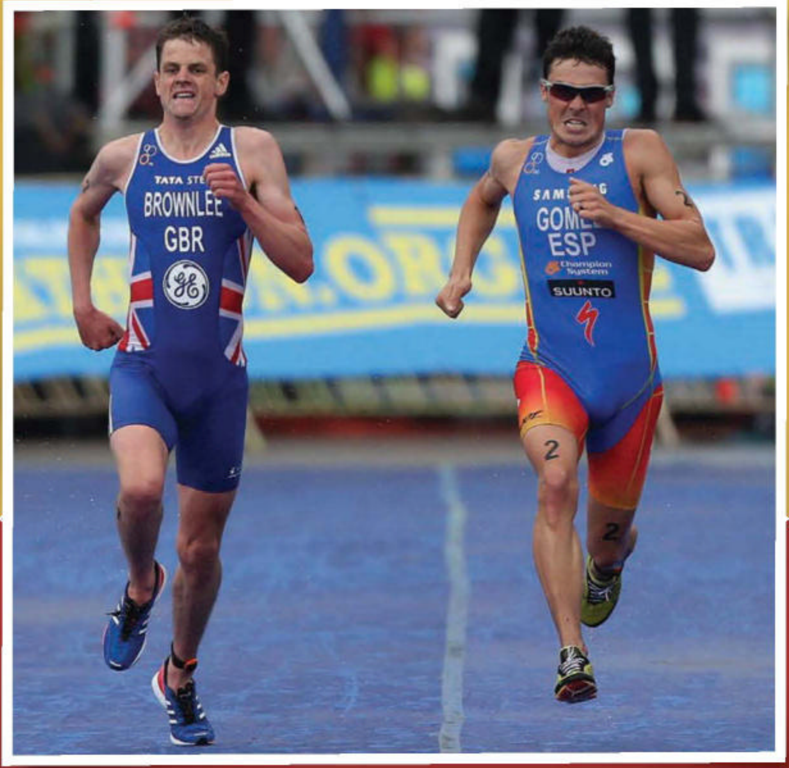
"But London, even though I didn't win that one, was one of the best races of my career. I performed to the best of my ability, I didn't make any mistakes, someone was just faster than me. A 29:15 [for the 10k] that's the best I could do that day, and that's what I did.

"On the other hand, there's the [2008] Beijing Olympics when I raced injured and finished in fourth place with a bad performance. That was, yeah… it took me some time to recover from that mentally. I know in Beijing, racing to my normal ability, I would have won that race. So I was very mad with myself because obviously that's my fault. I overtrained, I got injured before the race, lots of things happened."

"London, even though I didn't win, was one of the best races of my career"

And then there was Rio, 2016. The world was poised for a Brownlee-Gomez rematch, as, quite remarkably, the top three favourites for medals were still Jonny, Javier and Alistair, the podium-placers from London four years earlier. But a month before the much-anticipated showdown, Gomez crashed while training on his bike and broke his elbow.

"It's easy to say, could I have done this or that? But obviously the [Rio] course was good for me. I won the



◀ "Hayden [Wilde] and Alex [Yee] are two great kids and great ambassadors for our sport. Those rivalries are good, too. It reminds me of mine with the Brownlee brothers," reflects Gomez

▶ Gomez racing in the lead pack with both Brownlee brothers during the 2013 World Triathlon Grand Final in Hyde Park.

test event the year before, I was fit, I was ready. Maybe Alistair has a different opinion, but I think Alistair was probably better in London than in Rio, so maybe I had a better chance in Rio, I don't know.

"It was very disappointing and frustrating, but after three, four days of being really upset, you just accept it and move forward. It was tough, but I'm not going to say if I could have won or finished second or third or whatever, but I probably could have been there in the mix."

Gomez went for one last hurrah in Tokyo, in 2021, but a 25th-place finish was not how he wanted to end his Olympic career.

"The postponement from 2020 to 2021 wasn't great for me. I mean, it wasn't great for most, but obviously for the older athletes it's one more year that you have to maintain consistency and stay injury-free. Then I got an ear infection the week of the race. I just felt flat, and while I don't think I was capable of winning that race, I would have probably been top eight."

> *"Alex and Hayden are a different level. They can run faster than we ran"*

▼ Gomez, celebrates winning a record fifth world title, in Chicago, 2015

AN EVOLVING SPORT

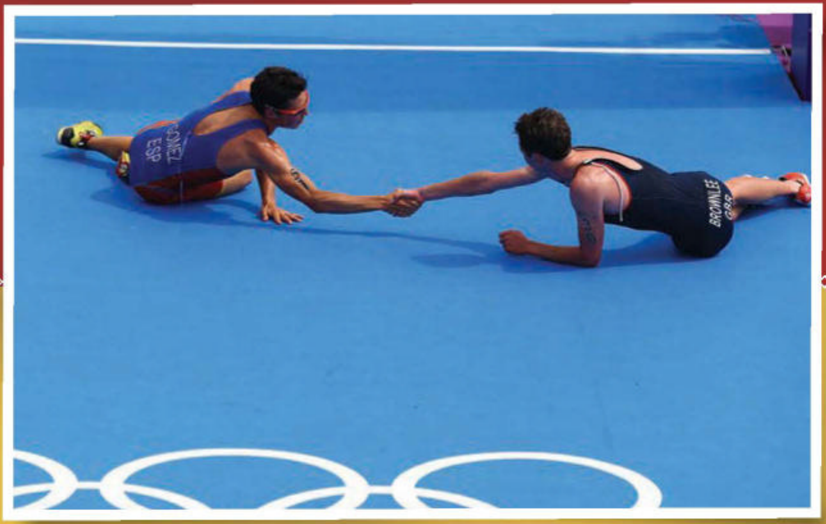
In Paris last year, the world was gripped by the rivalry and race that unfolded between GB's Alex Yee and New Zealand's Hayden Wilde; the former snatching victory from the latter only in the closing stages of the run. The images from the day were reminiscent of London 2012, when Gomez and Alistair reached across the finish carpet to shake hands.

"What Hayden and Alex are doing…they're two great kids and great ambassadors for our sport. Those rivalries are good, too. It reminds me of mine with the Brownlee brothers. It was good for the sport here in Spain, it made it way bigger.

"Alex and Hayden are a different level, too – they can run faster than we ran back in the day, although they do have the carbon shoes and stuff that we didn't have. But when they're at their peak, they are better, they are faster. The rest of the field is getting more and more competitive, though, and it's only natural that the sport keeps evolving and keeps getting better."

While Gomez applauds the inevitable elevation in competition, the one thing he isn't a fan of is the need for today's generation of athlete to document their every movement.

"I love to watch the sport, and I appreciate the best athletes and what they do, but not so much what they sell on social media. For a fan, I can see how it's ▸



Javier Gomez and Alistair Brownlee reach across the finish carpet to shake hands having just won silver and gold, respectively, at the 2012 London Olympics

entertaining and is a good way to see what athletes are doing. But as an athlete, you can go crazy with all that because you can see all this training that others might be doing, and it can mess with your head a little bit. You just have to just focus on what you're doing. It can be a bit of a fake world and the younger generation needs to understand that.

"I'm happy that for most of my career social media wasn't so important, and we had a bit more privacy. I think it also goes with your personality. I always tried to put my effort and my time into getting better as an athlete. I obviously did my social media, but not too intensely."

> *"Maybe I'm old school, but I understand the sport as an endurance sport"*

STICK TO A DISTANCE

Another change to the sport that doesn't sit well with the short-course king has been the introduction of more sprint races in the World Triathlon Championship Series – the conduit to the Olympics.

"Maybe I'm old school, but I understand the sport as an endurance sport – around two hours, one hour 50 of racing. Olympic distance is a great combination of endurance and speed.

Making it shorter for TV doesn't necessarily mean it's going to be more spectacular. You can make a marathon shorter, but then it's not a marathon anymore, it's the same with the triathlon. The distance has to be set. For the Olympic games, it should be Olympic distance. If they decide to go to sprint distance, I'm not a fan of that, but okay, let's do a sprint distance. But the athletes need to know what they're training for. Qualifying in a sprint event for the Olympic Games doesn't make sense to me and I don't think it happens in any other sport.

"I also think instead they need to find more interesting courses – more hills, more technical courses, like Madrid and Auckland, those were always my favourites."

A massive change to pro racing in recent years has been the sheer number of new races and series to the calendar, something which on the one hand is great for the growth of the sport but for Gomez poses an added hurdle.

"I think it generates quite a lot of confusion for people who are not really in the sport. Like, how many world champions do we have in different organisations and different distances? I don't know how to do it, but I think there are too many races and too many different organisations. I'd like to see one proper world championship.

"With T100, I like the format as an athlete, but I think non-drafting races are a bit harder to sell to the audience. I really appreciate seeing a great cyclist on his own on the TT bike, but for someone who doesn't really follow the sport, it's just one guy riding the bike. I think drafting makes it a bit more TV friendly.

"I'd like to see T100 and Ironman together, doing a big series for long distance... but I know that's not going to happen."

INSPIRING THE NEXT GEN

While Gomez won't get the chance to experience whatever the future has in store for tri out on the race course, he is at least in a privileged position to guide

GOMEZ'S BEST BITS

THANKS TO AN IMPRESSIVE LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS FROM A GLORIOUS 20-YEAR CAREER, JAVIER GOMEZ WILL FOREVER BE REMEMBERED AS ONE OF TRIATHLON'S GREATEST ATHLETES…

2012 Olympic Games silver medallist

5 x ITU/World Triathlon World Champion – 2008 (one-off race format); 2010, 2013, 2014 & 2015 (World Triathlon Championship Series)

4 x ITU/World Triathlon runner-up – 2007, 2009, 2012, 2017 – and 2 x ITU/World Triathlon third-place finisher – 2011, 2019

2019 ITU Long Distance World Champion

2 x Ironman 70.3 World Champion – 2014, 2017

2012 Xterra World Champion

4 x European Champion – 2007, 2009, 2012, 2016

2003 World U23 Champion

3 x Olympian – Beijing (4th), London (2nd), Tokyo (25th)

▲ Role reversal: Javier coaching the Spanish junior squad during a training camp in Lanzarote in January of this year.

Gomez will be remembered as one of the most successful triathletes of all time, with an astonishing 10 world titles and an Olympic medal to his name

those who will. And for the lucky youngsters who will receive his world-class tutelage, how does he hope his racing legacy will inspire them to emulate his success?

"If I can give them advice with my experience of over 20 years of racing on how to train, how to approach races, and if they can improve because of that, I'll be happy," he concludes.

"In those years racing the Brownlees, I think that we were the first complete athletes – good swimmers, bikers and runners. I think we raised the level in those years and in Spain, at least what I see here, the sport changed. It's a much more established sport, everyone has heard about triathlon, everyone heard about those British brothers that raced me.

"I see so many triathlon clubs here in Spain now, lots of kids doing sport in almost every town. And that didn't happen when I started, so I'm proud to see how much it's grown during these last 20 years. I guess I have something to do with that. Not everything, but some. I'm happy if that's my legacy."

We can already hear the Marcha Real blasting out over Brisbane. 220

Thanks Our thanks to Six Senses Kaplankaya, Türkiye for the time with Javier Gomez. Spaces are available on training camps with the man himself, who says: ""I'm thrilled to be the ambassador for this extraordinary multisport retreat by Roots Adventure Travel at Six Senses Kaplankaya. This retreat is a fantastic opportunity to immerse ourselves in the beauty of nature, push our physical limits, and bond with like-minded individuals. I look forward to sharing my experiences and inspiring others to embrace the outdoors, improve their performance, and find joy in the journey." See more at sixsenses.com.

THE FUTURE

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TRIATHLON OF TRAINING ?

An innovative academy in sunny Mallorca aims to nurture and inspire young talent, creating the triathletes of the future. We headed out to see how On Running, Canyon and Sailfish are hoping to create the opportunity of a lifetime along with one Coach Javier Gomez... ▸

WORDS TIM HEMING **IMAGES** ORBITAL FOR ON

sailfish
sailfish
UltimaStte

CANYON
CANYON
DT SWISS
DT SWISS
DT SWISS
ABUS

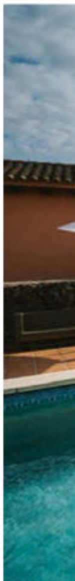
▲ Canyon and Sailfish have joined On in supporting the project.

It was a shoulder injury that eventually ended the triathlon career of Spain's Maria Ortega, but as she speaks at the launch of the On Triathlon Academy, it is the debilitating anxiety over attempting Olympic qualification that is her most powerful recollection.

Ortega didn't quite make it to represent Spain in those Rio Games of 2016, but it was the experience along the way that proved the catalyst for her true vocation, supporting athletes, and particularly developing athletes, to not only thrive in their careers, but have fun along the way.

The new On Triathlon Academy is Ortega's brainchild and a promise to be the antidote to her own experiences. In a sport where resources (or lack of them) can be the difference between failure and success, it offers a golden ticket to its first four recruits, promising young triathletes from around the world: Australia, Canada, China and USA. And as a blueprint for how brands can become more invested in supporting performance, Ortega has her fingers crossed it will work.

So too do leading bike manufacturer Canyon and wetsuit supplier Sailfish, who are partnering with On to make sure all the swim, bike, and run bases are covered. "We have a long-standing commitment to helping triathletes achieve remarkable results," says Canyon CEO Nicolas de Ros Wallace. "By powering On's Triathlon Academy, we're building on that legacy to support these four talented young athletes on their journey to representing their countries at the 2028 Olympics."



▼ Mallorca is the site of the training camp, perfect weather for future elites to train.

When 220 arrives at the private villa in Mallorca – a 20-minute cab ride inland from Palma, the island's capital – reached via a dusty track, and behind sturdy electric gates, it has initial *Love Island* vibes. In fact, the real Casa Amor is only 30mins away, but these producers are hoping to forge relationships of a different ilk; sporting ties and friendships that last rather longer.

The athletes landed a few days before and their awe-struck demeanours remain, particularly that of Jimena De La Pena, who, having been born in the US to Mexican parents, switched allegiance to the Stars & Stripes and now trains predominantly in Arizona.

Punctuated by plenty of giggles, De La Pena has a 'why me?' expression throughout, and the answer to that is twofold. Firstly, she has shown potential – last October she finished sixth in the junior World Championship in Spain – and secondly, character, including an eagerness to learn and engage.

While the athletes may not have known, Ortega had done her due diligence with both the national and international federations before making initial phone calls to athletes last year, which, as Australia's Aspen Anderson puts it: "We didn't believe were real!"

But it wasn't a hoax. The premise of the On Triathlon Academy is to support the athletes over the next two years, with the potential for an extension, as they progress from the junior and Under-23 ranks to elite competition.

On provides the run shoes and apparel, Canyon, the Aeroad road bikes, and Sailfish, the wetsuits, guaranteeing they'll be flying to their home training bases checking in a lot more than the hand luggage they landed with. The Academy will also be helping with flights and accommodation to certain events and plans to hold two training camps a year where the athletes have a chance to foster the bonds created in Spain. All the support is in addition to whatever their individual federations provide as it looks to supercharge their chances of success by providing an environment where potential can be fulfilled.

But it's the special touches that stand out, the pastoral care planned by Ortega and her team that lifts the athlete experience above a typical sponsorship based on kit, equipment, cash and bonuses. On our first afternoon, Academy mentor Javier Gomez drops in to introduce himself. Gomez retired last year after a stellar career that saw him win five short course world titles, London 2012 silver and the Ironman 70.3 worlds in 2014 – more in the previous feature this month!

"As a former athlete with experience they thought I would be the right person," says Gomez, who is now also working with the Spanish federation. "It's really exciting getting to know them, their training and their goals." Hailing from Pontevedra in north-eastern Spain, Gomez became the finest exponent of managing the demands of the sport's elite World Series that sees triathletes criss-crossing the globe to race in sprint and standard competition, plus relays. His 85 podiums ▶

WHY ON HAS STAYED LOYAL TO TRIATHLON

On has come a long way from its 2010 launch in the Swiss Alps, replete with quirky looking lugs and the promise you'll be running on clouds. An ambitious project by former professional triathlete Olivier Bernhard, the Swiss wanted to deliver the sort of cushioning in long distance running shoes that he couldn't find in his own career.

At the time, though, it was all about minimalism. Christopher McDougall's seminal work, Born to Run, following the barefoot tarahumara tribe in Mexico's rainforest, had caught the zeitgeist and the super stacked Hoka shoes were in their infancy. On was a cool idea but one, in a tough retail market, that would surely fizzle out. "I knew my triathlon friends were the only ones who would test it!" Bernhard says, and so it proved for a while. But the results of its CloudTec® started coming through, and bit by bit On's popularity grew.

The On of today is very different. It has expanded into other sports, notably running, where its On Athletics Club is a flagship project that sees groups of the best runners congregate around the world, its primary base being Boulder, Colorado. Tennis provides another mainstream outlet and in a reminder of its Swiss heritage, the legendary Roger Federer became an investor in 2019. Among its athletes it now sponsors include five-time Polish Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek and exciting young US talent Ben Shelton.

It has retained its distinctive, chunky lugs – the Cloud Monster series being the most recent model – but has also had to adapt. When Nike started the super shoe revolution around 2016, it quickly became clear that superior foam and a cleverly positioned carbon plate gave a sizable performance edge and On wasn't the only brand scrambling to keep pace. Runners were breaching or abandoning shoe contracts and there were reports of shoes being 'lost' in transit so a borrowed pair of Nikes was needed, or even blacking out of the Swoosh logo so as not to leave any time on the tarmac.

However, it became apparent On was approaching the pinnacle of performance at the 2022 Ironman World Championship in Hawaii, where winner Gustav Iden wore prototype shoes that were quickly whisked away at the finish. Questions over their legality were quashed when World Triathlon confirmed it wasn't following World Athletics regulations at the time, but one thing was certain, the shoes were fast: Iden set a new run course record of 2:36:15.

While those shoes were eventually outlawed, On's latest model, the Cloudboom Strike is even more innovative. It comes in at just under the legal stack height limit of 40mm and has an eight-layered carbon plate, but it is the shoe's upper on its Light Spray model - sprayed on by robots - that is its most eye-catching feature. A feather-light slip-on upper might be distinctive, but is the shoe fast? While we're learning that certain shoes work better for certain athletes, when it came to the Ironman 70.3 World Championship in New Zealand last year, Belgium's Jelle Geens ran a 1:07:34 split to take the title in a pair of Cloudboom Strike (with laces). Perhaps the most notable aspect: Geens wasn't sponsored by On.

▼ Former pro and project originator Maria Ortega with the four 2025 athletes.

On Triathlon
Academy

▶ On founder Olivier Bernhard welcomes the four young athletes to the Academy.

in 138 World Triathlon starts, many of them in an era where he would regularly face the Brownlee brothers, Alistair and Jonathan, as well as compatriot Mario Mola underline his pedigree.

"It's simple things like how to shake off the jet lag and get ready for a race, or specific stuff about certain races and courses," he adds. "But I think they're on a cloud right now. Most athletes their age have to find the money to travel the world, and if you don't do well maybe you don't go to the next one because you can't afford it. Some have more support from the federation, some have less, but just being able to focus on training and not worry about other things is definitely good as long as they can appreciate it, which I think they do."

Over dinner, prepared by Maria Salinas, a renowned Mallorcan chef, who was also hired by the USA cycling team in the Paris Olympics, there are more surprises. It's not just the menu of tuna tartare with nori crisp, followed by beef fillet with parsnip and rocket mash, asparagus and a delightful por and mushrooms sauce, but dedicated video messages from On's roster of experienced athletes welcoming them to the team. For Canyu Liu, from China, it's a note from Tokyo Olympic champion Kristian Blummenfelt, and the young athlete's excitement is palpable. It's a reminder of how big an impact established stars can have.

Post-dinner it's a bonding game of laser tag in the grounds of the villa. The athletes have already had an introduction to batucada, a Brazilian drum ensemble, and later in the week will be both cart racing and exploring the island's Drach Caves at Porto Cristo that conceal one of the world's largest underground lakes.

If there's one value that Ortega would like to see the Academy embody, it's patience. "Coaches want results as soon as possible, but I see fewer people telling athletes to take it easy, but you need two-to-three years where you learn to navigate this sport. We want them to become better human beings and manage different situations. We should create the time and experience needed, to make sure we don't lose talent and be ready for the elite category."

It's a philosophy Sailfish Founder and CEO Jan Sibbersen agrees with. "When On first approached us with this idea, we didn't hesitate," he says. "Sailfish is incredibly proud to offer four talented athletes the chance to pursue their dreams."

Ortega cites another mentor, Nicola Spirig, as an example of a triathlete whose first Olympic experience in 2004 wasn't perfect (she finished 19th in Athens in 2004), but she went on to compete in a record five Games, winning gold in London 2012 and silver in Rio 2016.

"Nicola said she was super nervous before a race and couldn't eat anything except chocolate," Ortega continues. "The athletes would never think that a two-time Olympic medallist would be nervous before a race, but I said: 'This is what every athlete goes through, This is why we are doing the camps.' We are not planning to have a coach for them because we understand that every athlete needs to find what works for him or for her, but we want to provide a structure and place where they can find peace of mind."

"As a former professional triathlete, I know firsthand the challenges young athletes face on their journey to the top," says Olivier Bernhard, co-founder of On. "We're creating a supportive community where these athletes can develop their skills and achieve their dreams without unnecessary pressure. This is about investing in the future of triathlon and empowering the next generation of champions."

Meet the Academy Athletes

The On Triathlon Academy has signed up four talented young triathletes

Aspen Anderson, Australia

Winner of the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games

Mathis Beaulieu, Canada

Third at the 2023 Junior World Championships

Jimena De La Peña, USA

Second place at the 2023 Junior World Championships

Canyu Liu, CHN

Winner of the 2024 Asia Triathlon U15 and Youth Championships in Hong Kong

33

ESSENTIAL ENDURANCE TIPS

Going long this year? Then you'll need to work on your endurance, or you'll be more struggling sloth than Duracell bunny... Here's how to supercharge your stamina with the latest research-backed strategies.

WORDS CHARLIE ALLENBY **IMAGES** GETTY/SHUTTERSTOCK

Triathlon is no easy ask for most people. Whether you're attempting your first race this year or moving up to one of the longer distances, there's no doubt about it – you'll be doing three sports, plus transitions, and chances are you'll be using up all your energy levels.

Endurance is key then. Luckily though, this is something you can build into your swim, bike and run training in plenty of small ways, which will combine to make a big difference.

1. BE CONSISTENT

Like any other training adaptation, improving your aerobic endurance and the health benefits that come with it requires regular, sustained work. A study published in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found that between 60-144 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise – split across two to three sessions per week – was optimal in terms of both quantity and frequency to start to see benefits.

Running coach Steve Bateman sums it up as 'use it or lose it'. "The absolute fundamental is regular running," he says. "Without that, you're going to provide a stimulus from a run, your body's going to make some adaptations if it's good enough, and then if you're not going to run for a bit, it'll start to lose those adaptations again."

2. FIRE UP FAT RESERVES

Endurance-focused cardiovascular exercise is powered by the body's aerobic energy system, which uses oxygen to transform your body's fat and sugar (glycogen) stores into ATP. Your body has limited stores of the latter, but it's possible to train it to use the former, saving glycogen stores for when you need them most. One study found that the sweet spot for metabolising fat was around 55% of your maximum effort, meaning you don't have to flog yourself to start seeing the benefits.

3. SWITCH THE TWITCH

Your muscles are made up of three types of fibre: slow oxidative (SO), fast oxidative (FO) and fast glycolytic (FG). SO responds well to slow, easy training and is slow to tire, while FG is best for sprinting. FO meanwhile is "kind of in the middle and can go either way depending on the training" explains Bateman. "If you go for longer runs at a lower intensity, then the middle types will adapt to be more like the slow-type fibres."

“You don’t have to flog yourself to see benefits”

4. STAY STEADY

Training for long periods at an easy intensity might not produce the same level of post-workout burn as a HIIT session, but keep it up for long enough and Bateman says it will transform your body into a mile-munching machine.

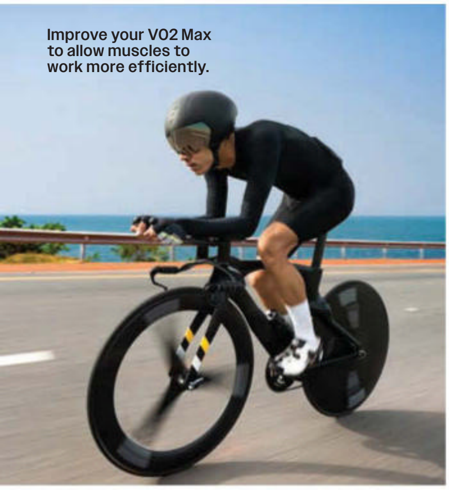
"Your body will adapt by increasing the size of your chest cavity and lung capacity, and your heart will increase in capacity and strength," he says. "It's having to pump blood at a higher rate for longer. It's also having to make sure it can transport the oxygen, the fats and the carbs from wherever they are in your body to your muscles, Inside your muscles, you'll promote the growth of new capillaries and new mitochondria, which are the energy-producing parts."

> *"Using less effort means you can go for longer"*

5. HIIT FOR YOUR HEART

The above isn't to say you should shun high-intensity work altogether. The short, hard efforts – above 10k pace for runners, or functional threshold power for cyclists – "provide a stimulus for your heart to get bigger and stronger, which means being able to transport more oxygen to working muscles and to transport it more efficiently," says Bateman.

This is also known as improving your VO2 Max – the maximum volume of oxygen per minute that can be captured from the air and utilised by the aerobic energy system. He recommends including high-intensity work from as early as the base-building phase of any training plan, beginning with short intervals and fewer repeats before increasing both as your plan progresses.



Improve your VO2 Max to allow muscles to work more efficiently.

6. IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

One way to boost your endurance is improving your efficiency – after all, using less effort means you can theoretically go for longer. While it's possible to drill down into details of your foot's landing when running, or how your hand is entering the pool when swimming, one simple way of finding better form is to add speed into the mix. "You want to achieve a higher intensity or faster speed, so you're asking your brain to move your body in a different way than if you went out for lots of easy [sessions]," says Bateman.

He recommends fartlek and accelerations – where you gradually increase speed from easy to almost a sprint between two fixed points such as lampposts – in the middle of a workout: "When you return to your regular [speed], some of what you just asked your brain to do stays with you." Over a long period, this starts to improve neuromuscular aspects such as "the way that your brain transmits the nerve impulses down to your muscles and how strong they are and in what sequence."

7. PLUMP FOR POLARISED

"The common theme in all top endurance athletes is that they do a lot of training," says Jack Hutchens, professional triathlete and coach for Scientific Triathlon. To accrue the hours without burning out through fatigue, most adopt a polarised approach. Traditionally, this has meant training either at a low intensity or high intensity, with the majority spent at the easy end to allow the body to cope with the load. But Hutchens explains it's important to not miss out on the middle ground:

"If you're preparing for an endurance event, that moderate intensity is the intensity you're going to be racing at, so you need to spend some time around that." He recommends keeping the volume of low-intensity work the same but adding in some moderate in place of high-intensity eight weeks out from an event.

8. BUILD RESILIENCE

While consistency might be the aim of the game, solely focusing on your chosen cardiovascular exercise can actually increase your risk of injury – denting your chances of building your endurance long-term.

"Most endurance sports have a very limited range of movement and you repeat that same limited range of movement thousands of times," explains strength and conditioning coach Scott Pearson from Fast Fit Strong. "You're overworking some muscles and underworking the opposing muscles. Most injuries that occur in cardio exercise are overuse injuries that are a combination of weakness on one side of the joint and a corresponding tightness on the opposite side of the joint."

Strength training, conversely, brings you through the full range of movement, loosening the tight areas, strengthening the weak areas and boosting things like bone mineral density. "It's multifaceted and undoes what your cardio sessions do," adds Pearson.

9. POWER UP

Getting stronger isn't just beneficial for injury prevention. Bigger muscles will increase your overall power potential, dragging your thresholds up with it. In endurance sports such as cycling, this allows you to put out more power for the same effort, or the same power for less effort.

"Power is derived as a product of strength and speed, so if you can lift a heavy weight quickly, you are more powerful," says Pearson. He adds that strength-based training outweighs plyometric "until you can squat with roughly double your bodyweight on your back", which is when "speed of movement becomes more important than the actual strength". Not many people are that strong, he adds, "so 99% of the time getting stronger will also get you more powerful."

10. GET BACK TO BASICS

It might be tempting to search out specific strength-based exercises to get the biggest gains, but Pearson says you'll get "the biggest bang for your buck" from five basic moves: squatting, deadlifting, pushing, pulling, and bracing through your trunk. "I like to build up the reps until the people I'm working with are consistent and competent in the exercises," he adds, "then I will slowly bring the reps back down and raise the weight up. There's no real need to overcomplicate things much more than that."

11. VARY THE LOAD

Like your cardio sessions, it's important to vary the intensity and frequency of your strength training as you build your endurance to avoid non-functional overreaching and dangers such as chronic fatigue. Pearson recommends approaching strength training on a sliding scale that contrasts with your cardio work. "Most sports will be summer-based," he says. "You can probably afford to cut back on your number of [cardio] sessions of those in the colder, winter months; so three or four [strength] sessions through the colder months, and one or two sessions through the warmer months.

Your risks of overdoing it will also depend on where you are in your strength training journey. "A runner who wants to start [strength] training now has massive room to be able to improve, and it's likely they will still be improving for between six to 15 months of basic, consistent gym training. Alternatively, if you have someone with one or two years of experience, the volume needed to get further improvements will be harder." ▸

"Power is derived as a product of strength and speed"

"Plyometric exercises store energy in tendons"

12. PUT A SPRING IN YOUR STEP

Working on your form can help you use less effort for the same amount of output – it's why cyclists practise pedal drills and swimmers are constantly trying to perfect their strokes. But when an activity involves a rebound – such as when your foot hits the ground in running – it's possible to improve efficiencies in the gym, too.

Plyometric exercises such as box jumps and burpees "train the ability to store energy in your tendons and reuse it," explains Pearson. "You'll get stiffer tendons and you will be able to transfer that power through your body more efficiently. In running for example, every time I land on the ground, kinetic energy is stored in my tendons and I can reuse that on my next foot contact, so I store and reuse the same energy over and over again.

He caveats that "for cycling and to a larger degree sports like swimming where there isn't any rebound, it's pointless" – and that it's not without risks: "If you're bounding, jumping and landing, and particularly if you're not used to it, then you put yourself at risk. Moving with speed is more difficult than just moving, so there's an added injury risk associated with that."

13. STRETCH OUT

While it might not get the heart pumping like a run, a Czech study found that those who practised an hour of yoga per day had better aerobic performance than those who spent a similar amount of time doing an aerobic-focused activity. Its authors suggested that an improved breathing technique could be behind the superior baseline figures.

Even if you don't have a spare seven hours each week to refine your downward dog, research suggests that two 50-minute sessions per week can improve lung capacity.

14. REMEMBER TO REST

As your body starts to make positive adaptations, it can be tempting to push yourself to train more frequently. But exercising more doesn't always equal more improvements. "If you train every day, you're not giving your body the space to make the adaptations," says Bateman. He recommends a minimum of two rest days a week and believes simply getting them is more important than their timing. "One of the questions I ask when taking on a new runner is, 'What days are you already fully committed and absolutely can't do any training?' We nominate those as rest days."

15. MAXIMISE RECOVERY WEEKS

To really amp up results, recovery shouldn't be limited to those two rests days per week. Most long-term training plans will include a two or three-week build phase, followed by a lower-intensity week that helps to really hammer home the adaptations. But it doesn't have to feel like wasted time.

"I do testing to see if [clients'] fitness has improved," says Bateman. "Typically, they're much shorter runs; they are high intensity but they're much lower volume, so your body does get a rest during that week. You're still training, because testing is training, then you're getting a read on whether fitness is improving."

16. SLEEP MORE

Sleeping is crucial for rest, recovery and getting your body ready for the following day's training session. While it's recommended that adults get between seven to nine hours of shut-eye each night, a recent study found that the optimum amount for athletes was 8.3 hours. The researchers found that participants had the best chance of getting enough sleep when hitting the hay between 10-10:30pm.

17. LOAD UP

Training consistently is only half of the battle. "If that stimulus never changes through progression, your body won't keep adapting," says Bateman. He adds that a good training plan will be based around progressive overload: "matching the level of stimulus to your body's ability to handle it (progressive), and adding just a little bit more (overload) to continue causing adaptations."

"It's important not to become a slave to data"

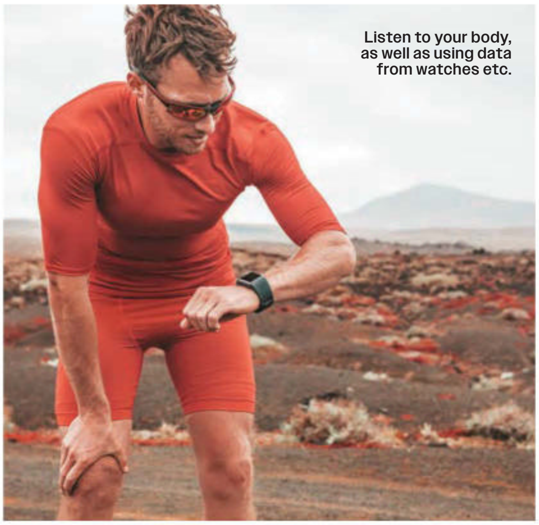
18. AMP UP THE ACCURACY

Noticing your endurance's improvement is difficult to do from feeling alone? Luckily, there's a wealth of tools built into even the most basic smartwatches that can help provide some hard evidence. "[Data] allows you to quantify what you're doing," says Hutchens, "so you can measure your progress in a more objective way," says Hutchens. He adds that it can also be key on a day-to-day basis for keeping your training intensity in check. "Having paces or heart rate allows you to keep a cap on where you're at and make sure you get the prescribed training intensity rather than above that. If you're going too hard in each session, your body simply can't recover."

19. REMEMBER WHO'S IN CHARGE

It's important not to become a slave to the data in pursuit of endurance gains. Hutchens recommends that it should be used to influence rather than guide daily training:

"I give power numbers, pace numbers, and heart rate numbers, but there is always also a rate of perceived exertion." Generally ranked on a scale of 0–10, zero would be relaxing, while 10 would be an all-out sprint you can only sustain for seconds. "I encourage all athletes to use that and listen to their body first," he adds. "The data is there to guide you – don't get too hung up on it."



Listen to your body, as well as using data from watches etc.

20. FORM A ROUTINE

Training consistently might seem like a simple way of building endurance, but the reality can easily become much more difficult when you throw work, life and other commitments into the mix. The solution? Remove the choice. "You need to incorporate your training within your daily routine, just the same as you get up and go to work," says Hutchens. "Motivation is limited and is for the occasions when things are against you – like when you've had to work late or the weather's really bad."

21. GO FOR GOAL

Struggling with motivation? Nothing adds a purpose to training like signing up for an event. "If you don't have an end goal or an event to work towards, when you get up for that early morning session it's easy to think, Why am I even doing this?," says Hutchens. It's not just applying a 'stick' approach to training, either, with the event at the end a carrot to look forward to. "You can meet like-minded people," he adds, "and that could maybe springboard onto other things that allows you to get more out of yourself in the long-term."

22. GET COMPETITIVE

Looking to increase your training volume? It's time to get social. A paper published in Nature Communications found that simply seeing that a peer had run further or faster inspired someone to push themselves that little bit extra on that day's run. Apps such as Strava are an effective way to keep in touch.

23. MASTER THE MACRO

A solid training plan will only get you so far. To really ramp up your aerobic abilities, you need to nail your nutrition. "With macronutrients, I always suggest that people look at their protein and their fat first, ensuring that they're adequate, with a periodised approach to carbohydrate – or fuelling for the work required," says Dr Richard Allison, consultant in performance nutrition and clinical dietetics for the Institute of Sport, Exercise and Health. He recommends between 1.8–2g protein per kg of body weight, 1–1.1g fat per kg of bodyweight and a minimum of 100–110g carbohydrate per day – adding more if you're active.▸

“Carb loading has been shown to delay fatigue”

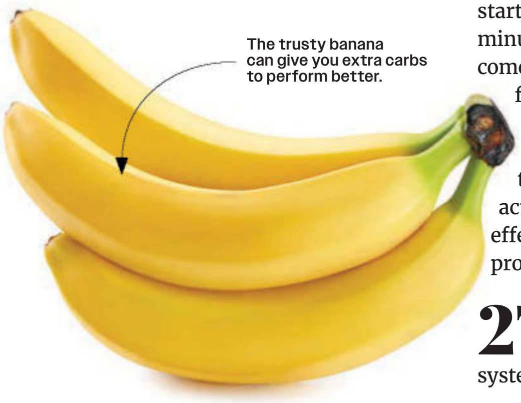
24. THINK FAST

It might sound counterintuitive, but exercising on an empty stomach may help improve your aerobic capacity. “If you include fasted training once a week, you get a cellular adaptation that increases both your aerobic capacity and your ability to recover from a muscle protein synthesis perspective,” says Allison. He explains that there is a master cell regulator – PGC-1alpha – that increases its responses when you conduct fasted training followed by a meal containing carbohydrates and protein.

25. CRACK CARB LOADING

Although not necessary for short sessions, what you eat before longer training days or events can have a transformative effect on your performance. Carb loading has been shown to delay fatigue and improve performance by 2-3% during endurance exercise longer than 90 minutes, and it’s recommended to consume 10-12 g of carbohydrate per kg of bodyweight per day up to 48 hours before a big day. But it’s possible to refine things further in the hours before starting, too.

“If you’ve got at least three hours before the event, you want to be having a low-fibre, low-fat, high-carbohydrate meal,” says Allison. “The reason for the low-fibre and low-fat is that they can delay gastric emptying. The hour before you start training, you want to include some more simple carbohydrates, which can be in the form of sports foods, supplements such as gels or sports drinks, or fruits such as a banana – that will give you some additional carbohydrate to allow you to perform better.”



The trusty banana can give you extra carbs to perform better.

26. TOP UP THE TANK

Even if you’ve optimally carb loaded, if you’re doing a longer event, you’re going to use up those glycogen stores at some point. Often referred to as hitting the wall, this is where your body has used up all your stored carbohydrates and starts the less efficient process of converting proteins and fats into energy.

“The rule of thumb is that you typically don’t need intra-workout carbs until about 60 minutes in,” explains Allison. During sessions over an hour, he recommends starting at 1g of carbohydrate per minute (60g per hour), which can come from a sports drink or a gel for ease of ingestion while active. “The exogenous carbohydrate – stuff you’re taking during your workout – actually has a glycogen-sparing effect and you use that as fuel to produce energy”.

27. DON’T FORGO FATS

The aerobic energy system doesn’t just rely on the body’s carbohydrate stores. Fat is a key energy source, too, and intramuscular triglycerides (fat stored in muscle fibres) can be converted into energy when combined with oxygen. “Yes, carbohydrate is king, but in those aerobic activities, you’re also oxidising fat,” says Allison. While all fats contain 9kcals of energy per gram, there are healthy varieties – mono and polyunsaturated such as avocados, nuts and oily fish – that can be more beneficial for cardiovascular health. “Bad fats can obviously have negative consequences to health,” says Allison, “and these tend to come from overly processed foods and seed oils.”

28. DRINK UP

Dehydration is a surefire way to hamper a workout – particularly beyond the hour mark. To delay fatigue through lack of fluids, it’s recommended to drink at regular intervals of every ten to 20 minutes, and consume between 600-1,200ml of liquid an hour. If the intensity is on the high side, it’s worth adding some carbohydrates into the mix, while sodium (which is present in electrolytes) might help with fluid retention on hot days.

29. BUT DON'T OVERDO IT

It is possible to have too much of a good thing, and overhydration can lead to a condition called exercise-associated hyponatremia – where the sodium levels in the blood become too diluted and can ultimately be fatal. Guidelines suggest that the best way to prevent taking on too much fluid is to drink to thirst, rather than constantly taking on water or sports drinks, with it better to be a little bit dehydrated than oversaturated.

30. GIVE YOUR AEROBIC CAPACITY A SHOT

Looking to give your training a boost? A pre-workout cup of Joe could be the answer. "Caffeine can help with uprating heart rates and actually increases your aerobic capacity of the exercising muscle," says Allison. He suggests 3-5mg of caffeine per kg of bodyweight about 30 minutes before starting exercise to feel the benefit, which translates roughly to a triple shot espresso for someone who's 70kg.

31. PRIORITISE PROTEIN

"When people think 'endurance', they're not necessarily thinking about muscle mass, but dietary protein is really important for recovery," explains Allison. The priority should be getting the correct amount of protein, which is closely followed by its quality and the amount of branch-chain amino acids (BCAAs), with timing the least important factor to consider. "The thing that can maximise your recovery and muscle protein synthesis is dividing up the protein and having it every two-and-a-half to three waking hours," adds Allison.

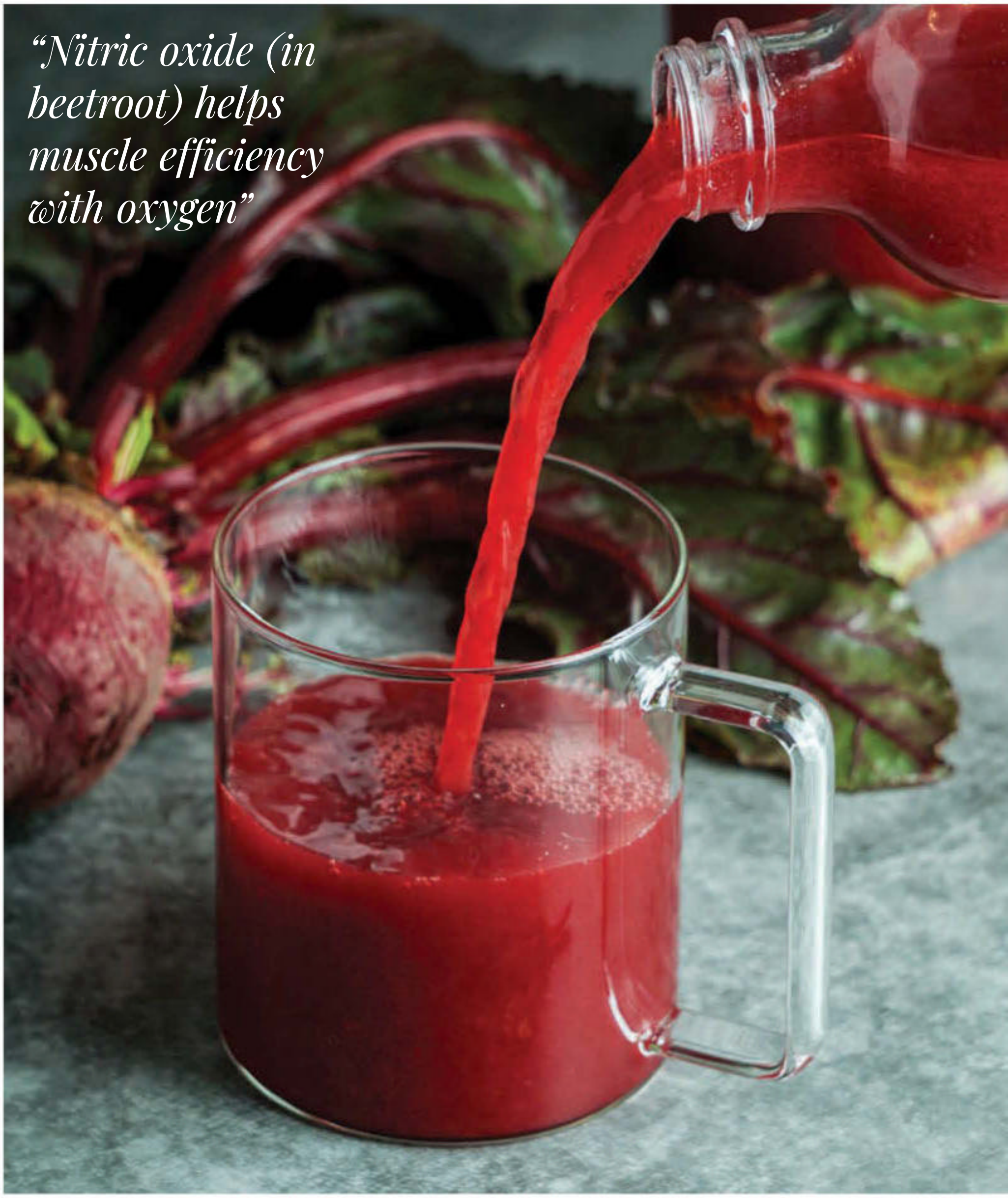
32. USE ESSENTIAL OILS

Suffer from delayed-onset muscle soreness (DOMS) after a long or hard session? It's time to ramp up the omega-3. "The mechanism is unclear, but it's been shown to reduce muscle soreness," says Allison. He recommends a high dose of approximately one gramme per 10kg of bodyweight. For reference, a 90g mackerel fillet contains 4.9g of omega-3, making it easier to achieve than you might think.

33. STOCK UP ON SUPPLEMENTS

On top of getting your ratio of macronutrients right, Allison suggests that other aerobic-enhancing nutritional improvements can be sourced quite easily through supplements. Beta-alanine "reduces the build-up of lactic acid in the muscle, so you can exercise or compete for longer". A small, 2g daily dose of creatine "increases the muscles' ability to produce energy", while nitric oxide – which can be found in beetroot juice – "helps the exercising muscle to be more efficient with oxygen". He stresses sourcing supplements from a reputable company and ensuring that they've been Informed Sport batch tested, to minimise the risk of contaminants that could cause a failed drugs test. 220

"Nitric oxide (in beetroot) helps muscle efficiency with oxygen"



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HELEN WEBSTER
220's editor is also a qualified open-water swimming coach.

ROB SLADE
220's content editor and resident adventure seeker.

MATT BAIRD
Has spent years testing tri kit and accessories for *220*.

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"Flip up the aerial on the charging case to turn it into a transmitter unit. That then sits by the water and as long as your phone is within 30 metres it will transmit to the headset"

ZYGO
Z2

£329 ★★★★☆

There have been several sets of waterproof bone-conduction swimming headphones in the pages of 220 recently and some of them – I'm thinking of Shokz and H20 Audio as standout brands – do a superb job of bringing tunes to the pool or open water. There is one limitation though, which is that you have to download music on to them to be able to use them in the water. For someone like me who only really uses streaming services, this can be a bit tricky.

Solving this problem is Zygo, who with the Z2 have bought out a bone-conduction headset which comes complete with a transmitting unit that can link to your phone and be used to 'bounce' the transmission from phone to your headset, even as you swim along.

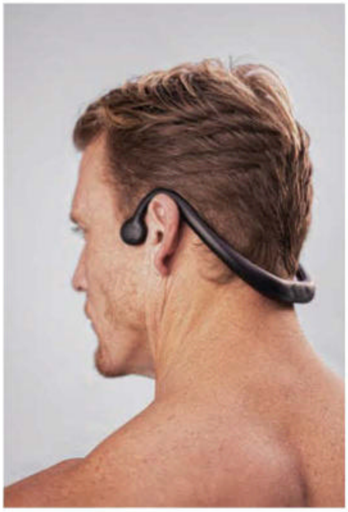
The first thing to do is measure your noggin and order the right size. I came out as 'standard' and the fit was good – slightly compressive, but not painful, plus the unit can be worn on top of your swim cap which was a bonus, as with previous brands tested I've found the top of my ears can get a little sore.

Next, flip up the aerial on the charging case to turn it into a transmitter unit. That then sits by the water and as long as your phone is within 30 metres it will transmit to the headset (worth noting the transmitter case is splash-proof but not submergible!). Volume can be adjusted via two depressions on the back of the headphone 'strap' which allow you to turn your music up or down as you swim.

So far so good – but this is where it gets exciting. As well as music, there's a function for clarity on spoken word audio (so you can listen to audio books) and in testing, I found sound quality superb under the water. There's even a small delay on the transmission to avoid annoying gaps or buffering if you do something like a tumble turn which may disturb signal.

It's not just about the music though. The Zygo app allows you do all kinds of other fun things like log your swims, get a notification sound every time you hit a pace or distance goal and – impressively – listen to training sets from coaches and athletes including one Alistair Brownlee. Though if you have the Form goggles like me, you likely won't use this feature much.

There's even a walkie-talkie function so if you coach, you can use your phone to talk to a swimmer in the water. The range is around 50m (less in salt water) and your music can last 2-3 hours depending on the volume. **HW** *shopzygo.com*



85 %

VERDICT Clever device which offers a unique solution with some helpful features

GOODR BOLT G

£40 ★★★★½

Several pairs of Goodr sunnies have made their way through my hands since they launched a few years back with their collection of whimsically-named, brightly-coloured sports glasses. Case in point? These sports ones are named "Tentacle Tag Champion" (three other colourways are available if the pink and purple isn't for you!). A smaller design than the brand's larger sports sunnies, I really liked how the Bolt G looked and felt. They hit that sweet spot between being a style designed for functionality in sports, but without making me look like I took a wrong turn looking for a peleton when I'm out riding or running. It is nice to have the open frames for visibilty and although the top frame and purple nosepiece were visible when on the face, it wasn't an annoyance.

Goodr claim a 'no slip, no bounce' pledge on their sunnies and that was true in testing. The wrap-around design sat snugly on the face with slight compression behind the ears (a little less may have been preferable, for me) and grippy pads on the inside of the arms. The inner nose piece is wired too and can be moved to get the perfect fit.

The mirrored and polarised lenses did a nice job of cutting glare while keeping colours true. Previously I've found the coating on the lenses scratched easily, but Goodr tell us these lenses are scratch-resistant and shatterproof with a scratch and saltwater-resistant coating and in testing, I didn't experience any problems. **HW** *goodr.co.uk*

83 % **VERDICT** Funky sports glasses at a good price point – worth a punt for style on a budget

SEALSKINZ HOLVERSTONE

£35 ★★★★★

Having picked up an infection from running on flooded muddy trails this winter (yummy), these waterproof run socks were an absolute lifesaver when they arrived. A waterproof inner membrane combines with a nylon outer and soft bamboo inner to create a comfortable, water-tight and effective seal. They may be overkill in summer but time will tell. **HW** *sealskinz.com*

90 % **VERDICT** Not cheap, but if you want to run and keep your feet warm and dry, a game changer.

QUAD LOCK STEM CAP MOUNT

£29.99 ★★★★½

Quad Lock's Stem Cap Mount affixes to standard round stem caps to cut down on handlebar clutter for mounting a phone to your bike. That counts many tri bikes out, but if you regularly do big days on the road bike and want to use your phone's mapping for navigation, Quad Lock's system is excellent. Just remove your top cap, tighten the Stem Cap Mount and attach your phone via a corresponding Quad Lock case – these are sold separately in sizes for almost any popular smartphone. My phone didn't budge a millimetre on test rides, and it's easy to get on or off with a twist and a click. **JS** *quadlockcase.co.uk*

87 % **VERDICT** Smart and super strong solution for phone mounting without clutter.

QUAD LOCK
PUSH

SPEEDO LOOKOUT SHORT

£53 ★★★★☆

Speedo claims its new Lookout hybrid shorts are "perfectly designed for use on land and in water", thanks to the fast-wicking Tetra Flex fabric that is said to dry in "record time". They come in four colourways and two leg length sizes, and I tried the sportier 16" versions. There's a sizeable internal liner so there's no need for underwear, and they're highly practical with two open pockets and a zip pocket. They're impressively soft and comfortable, and I'd happily wear them instead of regular shorts for runs or gym sessions. As someone who often goes for a dip after my gym sessions, I was hoping the Lookout short would provide an ideal solution without needing to change my bottom half – and for me, they aren't quite the real deal. While it's soft and airy, the liner does get bulky when wet, and this creates more drag than I'd like for pool swimming. I accept they're utility shorts, though, and they're fine for leisure swimming. For triathletes – most of whom don't mind sacrificing style for speed – I still think tri shorts are a better solution for transitioning from run to swim or vice versa. I found the quick-drying claims somewhat exaggerated, as they were still a little damp inside after I air-dried them overnight. They dry faster than regular running or swimming shorts, but don't expect miracles. Overall, I've mostly been impressed with the Lookout shorts so far, and will be using them for gym sessions, running, and general wear in summer. **JS** *speedo.com*

80 % **VERDICT** Comfy and versatile shorts for the gym, leisure swimming and more

KEEN
HYPERPORT H2

£95 ★★★★☆

Weird, huh? I know what you're thinking. Why are these strange sandals featuring in these pages?! Well because they're actually quite nifty if, like me, you find yourself running around a lot near water. The Hyperport H2 is a hybrid walking/outdoor shoe that combines breathability with quick-drying eco-friendly materials and a cushioned sole for comfort. I'd describe them as being like wearing trainers without your feet overheating and which can be used to run around on beaches, or through rivers or lakes with. I used them for lakeside swim coaching but they'd be great for swim-hike adventures. **HW** *keenfootwear.co.uk*

85 % **VERDICT** Not cheap, but if you need something for land and sea adventures, worth the spend!

BUFF PACK LIGHT CAP

£39.95 ★★★★½

Between sweat, mud and being scrunched up in pockets, run caps get a hard life in my world – but this light, packable version handled it like a boss. Full sun protection combines with reflective details plus it felt very cool once the mercury started to rise thanks to the breathable 54% recycled nylon. It was comfy too, with a stretchy wide elastic back with ponytail opening. **HW** *buff.com* **220**

88 % **VERDICT** Comfortable, light and versatile summer run cap perfect for travel and training.

GROUP TEST:
BIB SHORTS

Warmer weather is here, so it's time to get your knees out and your long ride on... Here's 12 sets of summer bib shorts ready to accompany you!

WORDS SARAH BROADLEY AND ROB SLADE
PHOTOS ED BROADLEY AND ANNABELLE CROWE

A decent pair of bibs will be your battle-hardened friend for interval sets and endurance sessions on the bike and turbo. But which pair of bib shorts is best and offers the best comfort and ventilation for cycling?

Yes, when worn alone they look like a 1980s wrestling outfit (please don't do this...), but a pair of bib-shorts are one of the key training investments a triathlete can make. Due to their durability and versatility for turbo training and outdoor bike sets of every type, their cost-per-wear ratio is one of the lowest in the tri wardrobe.

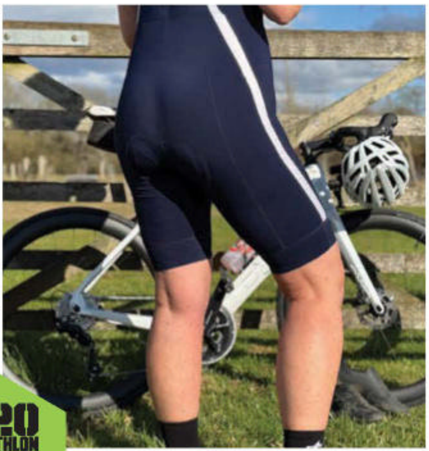
While they all look fairly similar, with an array of fabric types, pad options and strap combinations, there are subtle differences to look out for when buying your bibs.

Fit, as ever, is key and the overall sizing should be snug yet comfortable in the pedalling position and without any movement of chamois pad, so study the sizing chart. The pad size and thickness of the bibs on test here all vary.

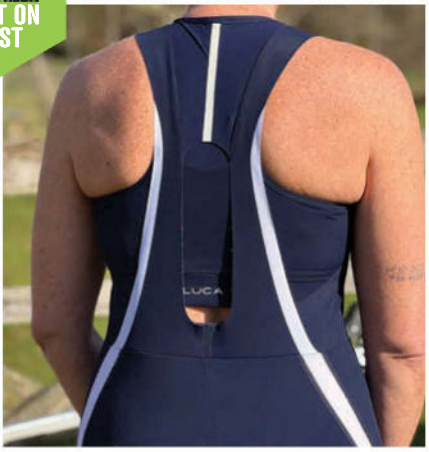
Chamois type can be a personal thing that depends on your size, your saddle type and, yes, how hardened your bottom is to extended sojourns on the bike, so studying the pad is essential. Happily for those who suffer from a sore bottom, pad technology has developed hugely in recent times, something evident in the multi-density and largely spongy options on sale.

Also worth thinking about is your intended use for the bib shorts. Some brands will offer thicker winter bibs, while others have mesh designs for summer riding and intense sets in the conservatory on Zwift. Here we'll assess the range of fabrics, strap designs and the finishing of the six men's and women's bibs on test in a bid to find the next pair for you. ▸

WOMEN'S BIBS



220 TRIATHLON BEST ON TEST



DI LUCA SIGNATURE ROAD ALL-IN-ONE £175

dilucabike.com ★★★★★

Just 5 years ago, Luca Kuhn set out to revolutionise women's cycling apparel by creating garments designed specifically for women. She wanted to empower women in the saddle so I was excited to test the Signature Road all-in-one and it really is impressive.

These bib shorts offer all the benefits of traditional shorts but with the added benefits of women-specific design features – most noticeably the straps and cut. Using Italian fabrics and made in Portugal with a mixture of stitched and bonded seams, the cut of the garment provides a beautiful tailored fit throughout. No gaping, no bulging – just the correct amount of fabric in the right places. The sizing is true to size, perhaps even slightly generous.

The simple design with white stripes running from the knee, up over the hip to the nape of the neck creates an athletic look with the added benefits of enhanced visibility through the reflective print technology used.

The upper body features are where these bib shorts really excel. Crafted with a streamlined cross over front and sleek racer back design you get unparalleled comfort coupled with freedom of movement. No slipping of straps or fiddling to get a comfortable position around the breasts. The bonded edges around the arms ensure no chafing from any seams.

Additionally, the extra modesty provided by the overlapping front provides versatility: no need for a jersey for turbo sessions or spin classes and the option to ride with just a jacket on cooler days reducing the need for layers.

The comfort pad is constructed from recycled materials including bamboo fibres and charcoal to create an eco-conscious pad with anti-bacterial properties. The result is a thinner, less rigid pad but without any compromise on comfort for the rear on long rides.

The leg length is on the longer side fitting well around the thighs and the openings are held in place by grippers lining the raw cut edges. My only criticism is that they are not quite as extensive as they could be and I did notice some rolling up at times.

The fabric is moisture-wicking so no fear of overheating despite the more substantial upper body design and with the additional UV protection you can remain cool, comfortable and protected on sunny rides.

Whilst in no way detracting from their position as a solid pair of cycling bib shorts, the design (sympathetic to female modesty) coupled with the lighter chamois does mean that you could use these bib shorts for a duathlon – ideal if you are new to the sport and don't want to invest in a trisuit just yet!

Luca has created bib shorts that I felt strong, confident and supported in.

95% **VERDICT** Revolutionising women's bib shorts – and about time! Very comfortable and practical design.

HUUB
AXENA WOMENS BIB SHORTS

£59.94 ★★★★☆

huubdesign.com

The HUUB Axena Bib Shorts offer a comfortable fit with a glossy feel to the italian dense fit fabric. However the mid-thigh seam coupled with fabric change does make for some unsightly bulge lines on the inner thighs.

These shorts offer a medium leg length with a raw cut seam and the seamless silicone dot matrix bonding effectively holds them in place so there is no movement.There is mesh webbing between the shorts and straps providing breathability and comfort at the waist. The elasticated shoulder straps don't feel as premium as some of the others but do stay in place.

The high density foam chamois with thicker foam under the sitting bones provided a comfortable ride even on long indoor turbo sessions. Good price, too.

76 %

VERDICT Comfortable shorts with a subtle design. Not our top scorer, but a good offering for the spend.

220 TRIATHLON BUDGET BUY

CASTELLI
ESPRESSO DT WOMEN BIB SHORTS

£175 ★★★★½

castelli-cycling.com

The Espresso range from Castelli offers hard working, durable kit for all your training needs. Made from the Espresso Doppio fabric these shorts are elegant, snug and keep their premium feel even with regular use and washing.

They have an elasticated waistband and drop tail bib straps that can be worn crossed over at either the front or the back depending on your preference. The silicone grippers provide a comfortable and secure fit around the legs and there is a handy little pocket on the rear with an elasticated opening to hold things secure.

The pro-level Progetto X2 Air Seamless seat pad is super soft and provides a good level of comfort under the sitting bones with reduced bulk in other areas. Six different colours are available.

90 %

VERDICT Premium shorts that were comfortable and I liked the soft and quality chamois.

WOMEN'S BIBS

220 TRIATHLON
HIGHLY RATED

ASSOS DYORA R BIB SHORTS S11

£165 ★★★★★

assos.com

The Dyora R S11 bib shorts from Assos reflect the design of this Swiss racing range with streamlined, minimalised, precise styling. On unboxing, from possibly the most beautiful packaging ever received, I was skeptical – the shorts looked tiny and were extremely lightweight. I was however pleasantly surprised and with every wear loved these shorts more.

The warp knit fabric feels premium, is silky soft to touch and when on, feels like a second skin. With raw edges at the leg openings and around the majority of the waist, these shorts have hardly any seams. In fact, they are so lightweight you can hardly feel you have them on, even with the compression qualities around the key leg muscles.

At first, the waist felt like it sat rather low but this actually assisted with comfort when riding on the drops as there was no excess fabric causing chafing or heat build up when adopting a more aggressive riding position.

The legs are held in place by four minimalist anti-slip grippers which did their job well during testing – no unwanted movement even with lots of position changes from seated to standing on the turbo. The straps are wide elastic with a premium feel fabric used on the front. The fixed cross over at the rear avoids unnecessary twisting of straps when putting them on and prevents any slipping when up off the saddle climbing on steep hills with the inevitable body rock.

ASSOS have built in odor control and SPF 50 making these shorts fabulous for summer rides. The breathability of the fabric kept me cool when training and there was no noticeable sweat patches even on the light colour. I did experience some moisture build up around the creases at the top of the legs but this did evaporate quickly once off the bike avoiding any embarrassment.

In keeping with the minimalist design, the seat foam pad is cut from one piece of thermoformed foam with a 3D, three layer waffle cover which provided plush cushioning whilst minimising weight. It's held in place by just a few carefully placed lines of zig zag stitching to allow for better movement to create a body contouring fit. It works but does creating a slightly unconventional look from the front.

The lightweight fabric coupled with the lighter pad enabled a fast turn around in the laundry and they washed and dried super quick. The clever placing of the washing instructions on the exterior of the strap crossover point means no annoying labels.

The Dyora S11 shorts are available in three colours – secret blue (here), edge green and black series with women's sizing ranging from XS to XXL. I found the fit true to size guide.

94 %

VERDICT Quality shorts with plenty of attention to detail and a minimal design that really works.

PEARL IZUMI
PRO BIB SHORTS £195.65

★★★★★

pearlizumi.eu

The Pro bib shorts are eye-catching and feel super sleek and almost silky. The Italian PRO transfer fabric is light and the design has no material change between the shorts and the straps. All the edges that come into contact with the skin have been laser cut so are seam-free, enhancing the luxurious feel. The chest clip on the shoulder straps allows for either a wide or narrow position. This together with the wider cross over rear straps create a supportive fit without being restrictive. These bib shorts had the shortest inseam of those in the group test but the grippers held them in place. The chamois pad is super soft on the inside with almost a brushed cotton feel to the inner pad and was the most malleable of all the pads. If budget allows, these have a luxury feel and are ideal for rides in warmer climates.

92 %

VERDICT A classy set of shorts with a real premium feel and a chammy that adjusts to ride position for comfort.

220 TRIATHLON CUTTING EDGE

RAPHA
CORE BIB SHORTS £135

★★★★★

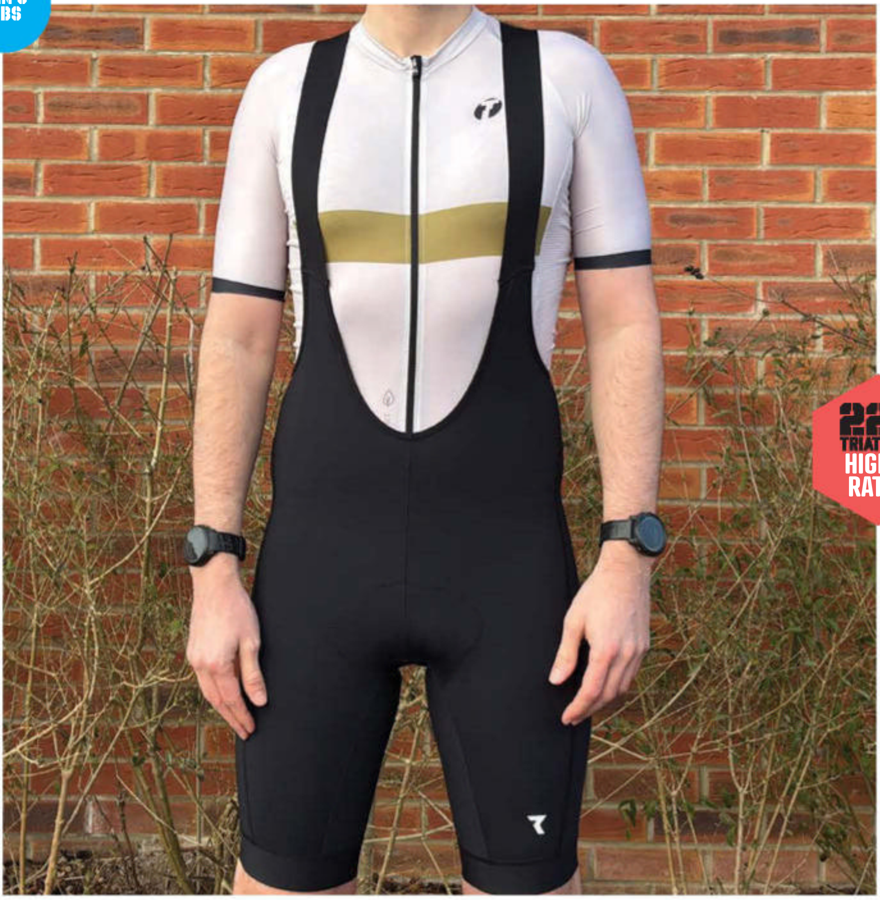
rapha.cc

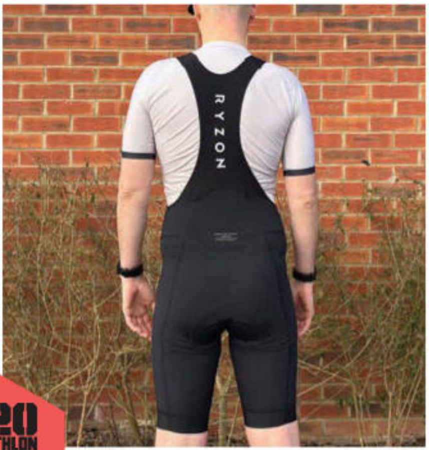
Made with 79% recycled materials, the dense-knit fabric provides light compression and the slightly heavier material is welcomed in the British spring. The leg length provides a good fit around the quads and the silicone edges offer just the right amount of grip to nicely hold the legs in place without being constrictive. The fit is true to size, perhaps even slightly generous, unusual in many cycling brands. The Core bib shorts have a women's specific cut chamois and it was certainly the most substantial of all the chamois on test. Any uncertainty of it being too large when first put on are instantly quashed once you are on the bike – the most comfortable shorts on test in the saddle department offering day long rides with no discomfort. Rapha's Core Bib shorts are the perfect training shorts.

93 %

VERDICT The best chammy on test and the ideal shorts for the UK's temperate training climate.

MEN'S BIBS





220 TRIATHLON HIGHLY RATED

RYZON
SIGNATURE CYCLING BIB SHORTS

£210 ★★★★★

ryzon.co.uk

No, that's not a typo. The Ryzon Signature Series bib shorts come in at £210. That's the most expensive option on test here and the price may (understandably) be hard to swallow for some, but we're going to pop that out of our head for now while we talk through the performance.

The material and construction feel very premium. The main fabric on the legs is made of 65% recycled polyamide and 35% elastane, while the mesh back fabric is 80% recycled polyester and 20% recycled elastane. That recycled polyamide in the legs is a material from Italy called ECONYL. It's designed to be breathable and quick drying, and is made of "regenerated fibers from nylon waste such as fishing nets, old carpets, and industrial plastic". It's a nice touch to see the use of recycled fibres, which isn't all that common in this type of cycling clothing, so kudos to Ryzon on that. I was also pleased to see the manufacturing taking place in Portugal, which limits carbon emission.

Anyway, back to the bibs… The material feels lovely and soft, while comfort is boosted by the flatlock seams. While I wear medium in casual or running shorts, I typically size up to large in bibs, which is what I've done here, but this wasn't necessary. The Signature Series bibs are only said to have medium compression, which definitely rings true, and there's less support on offer than some other options here. Admittedly, though, dropping a size would make a difference to that (sizing runs from XS to XL). Despite that, the fabric still fits closely against the skin and there's no movement on the legs, with the wide bands at the hem and their silicone backing working well to keep them in place. Freedom of movement is great.

In a further boost to comfort, the front of the shoulder straps are entirely seamless and also have a low-profile silicone backing to help keep them in place. At the top of the rear they swap to seamed straps, using a perforated mesh material from here, along the back panel to the top of the waist area. The back panel comes up quite high (as does the waist, but not to the detriment of toilet stops) and the mesh is a little more tightly woven than the likes of the Gorewear and Le Col bibs, so these shorts can feel somewhat warmer when temperatures rise. The material wicks moisture well, though, and the temperature regulation isn't dissimilar to others on the market.

Ryzon recommends these bibs for rides up to around eight hours and I had no reasons to disagree. The antibacterial chamois felt very comfortable, balancing support and cushioning well. I'd say the cushioning feels higher density compared to several others on test.

88 %

VERDICT Impressive build quality and comfort, but can feel warm and the price is steep.

CRAFT
ESSENCE BIB BIKE SHORTS

£80 ★★★★☆

craftsportswear.co.uk

The Craft Essence bibs have a lot going for them, and it's not just the price. They're made out of a mix of recycled polyamide (78% of the lower body), standard polyamide (on the straps) and elastane. The fabric is comfortable and thin, so it lets a bit more air through than some others do here. The shoulder straps aren't seamless, which means they don't hit the heights of comfort that some others do. They use a mesh fabric, as does the back, to help keep the temperature down. Silicone grippers help keep the legs stay in place while the fit feels supportively compressive. While the chamois pad proved comfortable for the most part, it doesn't feel quite as supportive and cushioned as some alternatives here. Sizes from XS to XXL

72% **VERDICT** A solid value option that doesn't to anything wrong, but also doesn't blow me away.

220 TRIATHLON BUDGET BUY

LE COL
SPORT BIB SHORTS £145

★★★★☆

lecol.cc

Comfort was high for the most part in these bibs. The only minor issue is the embroidered logo on the rear of the bum, which was an occasional irritation. I tend to prefer seamless shoulder straps, but they're not present here. That's because the entire upper part of these bibs, including the straps, is made of a super thin and lightweight mesh, which helps massively with temperature control on hot days. The mesh isn't going to be the most durable, though, hence the seams. Therefore, there's less stretch in the straps, making toilet stops a little trickier than others. Fit is true to size, the legs feel compressive and the wide bands at the hem are backed with silicone grippers that keep the legs in place well. The triple-layer chamois is decent and has a gel insert.

80% **VERDICT** Supportive and great in hot weather, but small question marks over comfort and mesh durability.

MEN'S BIBS

220 TRIATHLON
BEST ON TEST
castelli

CASTELLI ESPRESSO BIB SHORTS

£175 ★★★★★

saddleback.co.uk

Castelli makes some incredible cycling and triathlon kit (its PR 2 tri-suit is one of the best around), but like all brands, not every product is a hit. So what's it going to be with the Espresso Bib Shorts? Well, it's looking pretty good, if I'm honest.

Fit proved true to size and feels compressive and supportive. In fact, I'd say out of the six men's options on test, this is one of the tighter fits. That's no bad thing if you enjoy more of an aero fit and it provides great muscular support, while at no point does it feel restrictive. You get raw-cut hems at the end of the legs, which is a further boost to comfort, and these are supplemented by small strips of silicone to help keep them in place. It's less silicone than you get with many other bib shorts but, combined with the compressive fit, I had no issues of movement at all on test rides.

Staying with the theme of comfort, the shoulder straps are seamless and heavily perforated, ensuring both zero irritation and fine breathability. At the rear, the back panel is formed of an even lighter mesh that delivers the best airflow of any shorts on test. This panel is also one of the thinnest on test, measuring just five inches wide, which is great as it helps keep things as cool as possible on really warm days. At the front, the waist comes up to around an inch below the belly button, so not necessarily that high or that low, but it's certainly not going to contribute to you overheating. The cut, and the elasticated shoulder straps, also help make toilet stops reasonably trouble-free, though it did put a bit of a strain on the stitching.

Now, onto the chamois. Castelli has used a Progetto X2 Air Seamless pad in these shorts, which it calls 'the most comfortable seat pad on the planet'. That's a bold claim, and one that I'm not necessarily going to stick my neck out and agree with, but the cushioning definitely worked for me over varied distances. The pad is entirely smooth and uses a 'bacteriostatic layer' that's designed to adapt to the shape of your body without causing any folds in the fabric. I certainly didn't experience any of the latter, while the varying zones of thickness offered adequate support and comfort, though it does tail off quite thinly at the front.

Choice is a fine thing, so it's great to see a size range running from XS to 3XL, plus 11 different colour options including everything from black and blue to beige and red (I'd love to see the sale stats on those!). Additional features include small reflective details on the rear of the leg and a reasonably large radio pocket on the lower back. The latter may be useful for a couple of cards or energy gels, but I'm not sure I'd want to consume them after a couple of warm, sweaty hours in the saddle.

91 %

VERDICT A blend of comfort, support and quality make these my best on test in this round-up.

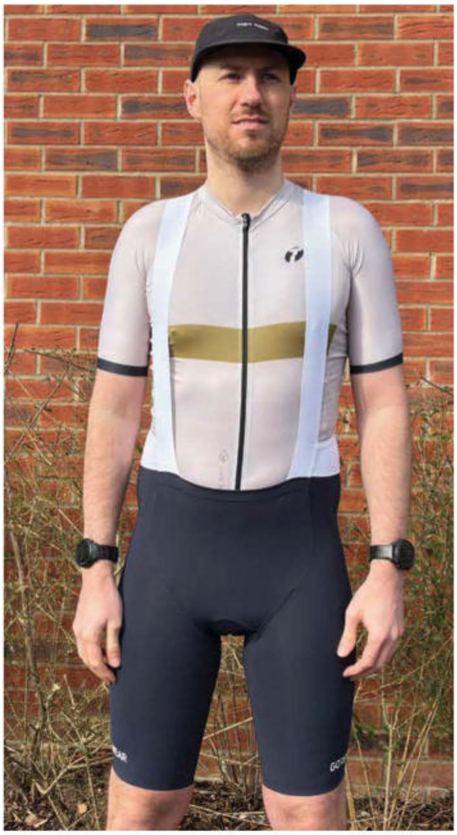
GORE
SPINSHIFT BIB SHORTS

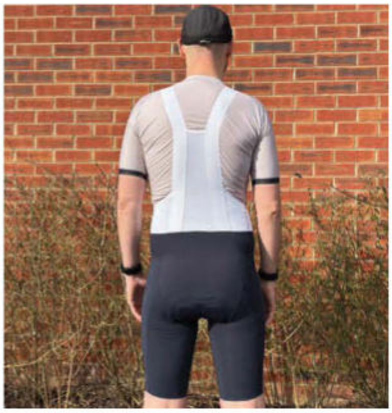
£124.99 ★★★★☆

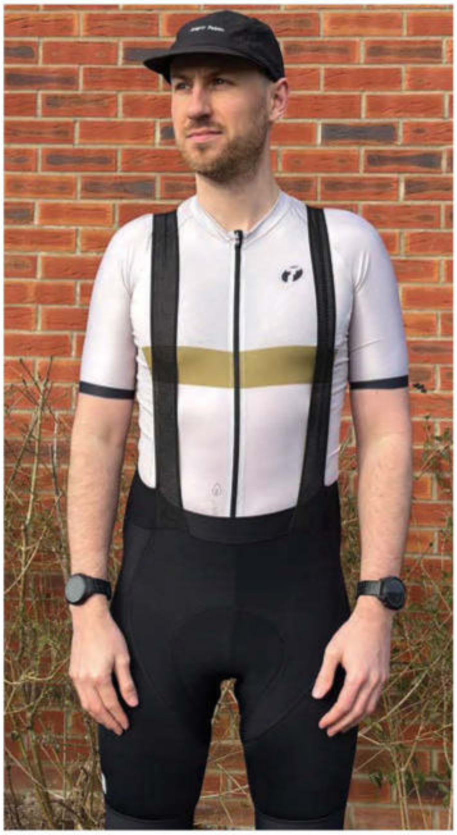
gorewear.com

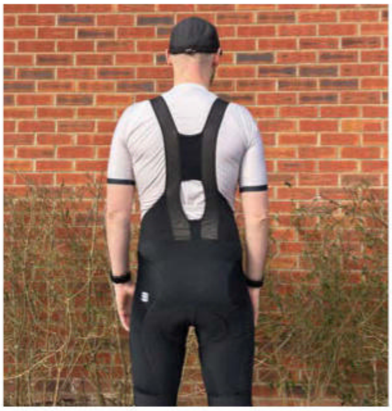
Here, the material on the legs feels nice, comfortable and supportive, though the fit is definitely more restrictive around the crotch than others (sizing runs from S-3XL). Flatlock seams, seamless shoulder straps and raw-cut leg endings help avoid irritation, though the minimal silicone grippers don't eliminate movement so well. The cut at the front of the waist is low, sitting two or three inches below my belly button. This makes toilet stops easy and helps keep things cool, but it does also mean if you have any sort of belly it tends to hang over the waist. In a further boost to warm-weather performance, the rear back panel is thin and breathable. Meanwhile, the pad proved comfy enough but without zonal differences and long-term density.

80% **VERDICT** These shorts do a lot right, but they don't hit the heights of some of the pricier shorts.









SPORTFUL
LTD BIB SHORTS **£139.90**

★★★★½

saddleback.co.uk

If you're looking for highly compressive shorts that lend themself well to the height of summer, the Sportful LTD Bib Shorts are an option worth considering. The fit is close, aero and supportive on the legs and there's minimal movement thanks to the wide hem sections backed with silicone and the compressive fit. It's worth noting that the length may be a little long for shorter riders. The waistline is relatively low at the front and there's a cutout in the back panel. Both help in warm weather, but I found the latter itchy at times. The shoulder straps are seamless and very comfortable, with a heavily perforated material boosting breathability. The chamois feels like one of the more cushioned options here with up to 13mm of padding. Sizing runs from S to 3XL, only in black. **220**

83% **VERDICT** Compressive, largely comfortable and I found them great in warm weather

GETTY

GROUP TEST:

POOL GOGGLES

Looking for a set of goggles for long pool sessions or indoor racing? I've tested six new pairs...

WORDS AND PRODUCT IMAGES HELEN WEBSTER
LEAD IMAGE GETTY IMAGES

If you use a do-it-all pair of swimming goggles for both the pool and open water, you could be missing a trick. I use different goggles for each for a few reasons. Firstly I prefer the feel of smaller goggles, but there is sometimes a compromise with width of vision which makes them less suitable to outdoors. Secondly, the tint of my open water goggles (especially the ones I use in summer) will be too dark for the pool!

So what makes a good set of pool-specific swimming goggles? Typically these will be smaller and fit more 'inside' your eye socket. The reason for this is two-fold. Smaller goggles are more streamlined, so will create less drag than a larger goggle. If you're racing at all in Masters competitions, this could help give you the edge.

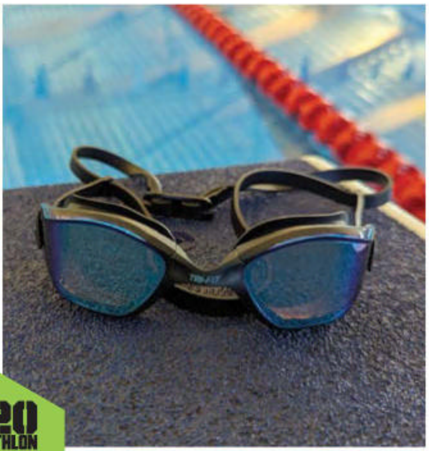
Pool goggles don't need to be as big either, as you don't need as much peripheral vision in the pool. With the black line to guide you and clear rules on where you can swim, it's less important to be able to look around you. Plus if you're doing dive starts, they are more likely to be streamlined and stay put once you hit the water!

In terms of the lenses, you need clarity of vision in the pool and a tint to the lenses that can help cut out the glare of fluorescent strip lights. Lenses with a simple blue, amber or smoked tint will do a good job here and a certain amount comes down to personal preference. Or you can choose clear lenses, of course.

Personally I prefer mirrored goggles, which helps cut out glare too. Plus, they look better (in my humble opinion) and can give a psychological advantage if you're racing, as your competitors can't see your eyes!

Finally, a word on straps. Look for a pair that won't easily come off. A split strap with good grip is handy for dive starts and/or if you wear your hair in a bun under your cap. I don't tend to adjust mine often once they're done once, but if you do like to adjust your goggles look for an easy mechanism. Now, on to the testing! ▸

***Thank you** to St Mary's Calne Sports Club in Wiltshire (smcsports.co.uk) for allowing us to use their 25m swimming pool for the product photos in this feature.*



220 TRIATHLON
BEST ON TEST

TRI-FIT PROPEL £40

★★★★★

tri-fitathletic.com

They might be (relatively) new kids on the block only launching back in 2017, but Tri-fit have quickly established themselves as a key player and favourite brand of the *220* team when racing (see page 84 to see our writer Michelle competing in their eye-catching Geo Lightning tri-suit!). But when it comes to goggles, I'm ultra-picky and the Propels – along with the Volts (review coming soon) are two brand-new styles for this season. So how did they fare?

Well, the shiny green 'best on test' badge is a giveaway of the five-star status of the new Propel design. These are a sleek, stylish set of goggles that just ooze performance from the off.

First up, the lenses. The shape is a sleek, cat-like extended lens which is slightly longer than many other pool goggles, allowing a little more peripheral vision but also meaning they sit a little more flush against the side of the face, which made them feel secure and not too prominent – handy if you're worried about them getting knocked, or becoming loose during a dive start.

Visibility is good with the Propel, though you can see the black inner gaskets as you look left to right. Not a problem in the pool, though if this is something that bothers you then look to the new Volt style, which has an unparalleled range of clarity without obstruction in open water.

As for the tint, the Propel only comes in this one colourway at the moment with optical-grade PC lenses with HD clarity and UVA/UVB protection. They have a REVO mirrored coating, plus Tri-fit tell us they are scratch-resistant, impact-proof, waterproof, and fingerprint-free as well as (crucially) featuring anti-fog technology. All these things held up during my testing over several weeks in this pair.

The tint is a greeny-purple which added a pinkish tint to neutral colours and dulled the glare of pool lights. I also tried these in open water and found them to work well against harsh spring glare from the sun.

On to fit. These come with a choice of three nose bridges and I swapped in the smallest size which worked perfectly and was easy to snap in place. The gaskets were soft and the goggles easily secured on my face without too much faffing or adjusting. They didn't leave prominent goggle marks, either.

The strap has a long, flat plastic side piece before you meet the actual strap, which kept the goggles flush against the side of my head. The split strap sat well around my bun and felt secure. Adjustment is via a single clip in the middle of the strap, which is easy to do and works if, like me, you don't usually adjust again on the fly.

Finally, these came with a large hard case to keep them safe from damage.

95 %

VERDICT Quality, classy goggles at a good price that I'll be reaching for time and time again this season.

HUUB ETERNAL

£39.99 ★★★★½

huubdesign.com

The Eternal are a new goggle to me and come in two options: a clear version for the pool or dull days and this mirrored version to block glare or harsh lights. Huub describe this as an 'all-round race goggle that swimmers and athletes could use in the pool or open water' and that rings true thanks to the sleek looks and low-profile design, though I tested both and found for me, the mirrored version was great for indoors and outdoors (though I'm not a lover of clear lenses!).

The black and khaki colourway is unusual but will appeal to athletes looking for a subtle design. Visibility overall was good, albeit with a little distorion at the bottom of the lenses. Adjustment is via a single clip on a split strap that gripped well and didn't budge.

90 % **VERDICT** Smart goggles that are comfortable and adapt well to either pool or open water swimming.

HUU
220 TRIATHLON
HIGHLY RATED

220 TRIATHLON
BUDGET BUY

FUNKITA TRAINING MACHINE

£16.95 ★★★★½

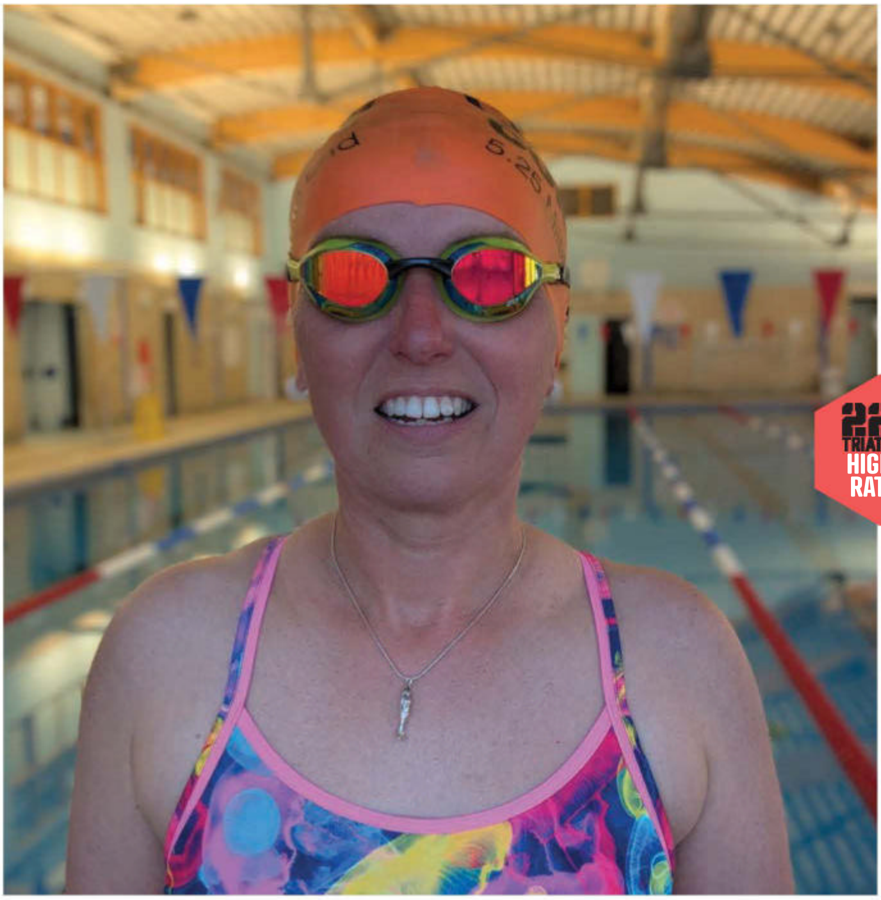
funkita.co.uk

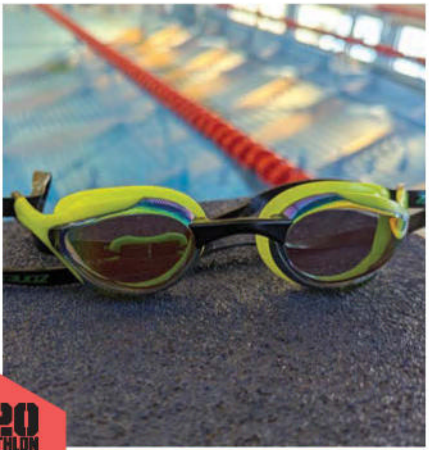
These are a funky little set of goggles (as you'd expect from a brand with a name like Funkita!) and although they aren't mirrored the pink tint to the side of the lenses (this is the 'Sweetie Teetie' colourway) avoids them looking completely clear if not your thing – but to look through there is no colour change to the front. I'd usually prefer a tint to avoid harsh pool lights but it's not a deal-breaker here.

I liked the simple design of these. They sat well in the eye socket and the fitted nose bridge worked for me. The gaskets were a little firmer than others on test but sat well without much smooshing needed (technical term!) into the face.

Adjustment is via a single clip and you also receive a hard case. Bargain!

83 % **VERDICT** The clear lenses and fluro design may not be for everyone, but a workhorse goggle at a great price.





220 TRIATHLON HIGHLY RATED

ZONE3 VOLARE

£35 ★★★★½

zone3.com

The mighty Volares from British tri brand Zone3 have been around for a few years now but they must (and are) doing something right, as they are one of the designs I see the most at the local pool.

So how have they stood the test of time? The sleek, low-profile design is bound to appeal to serious swimmers and triathletes. They look good and even if you don't believe in the impact this can have on racing, I always feel like I am in a better mindset for swimming if my goggles feel 'racey'!

Here I tried out the green/black colourway with a mirrored lens but they also come in teal/cream/copper with a polarised lens, black and red with a mirrored lens (which scored 80% last time I tested these) and in a black version with a clear lens.

For me, this colourway was preferable but I would have been interested to try out the polarised version too to see what the read-across was between pool and open water. Plus at the time of going to print, that version was reduced to £17.50 online which is an absolute bargain if still available – worth a punt if you're on a budget this season!

Zone3 describe the Volare as: "Our ultimate swim anywhere do anything goggle, combining the low-profile look and performance of a pool racer with the comfort of the ultra-soft silicon gaskets usually only featured in open water swimming goggles". That rings true in my experience, as like the Tri-fit and Huub goggles also within this test, these could easily work across both. It's nice to see this from the tri brands included, too – not all of us want to buy multiple goggles for training and racing.

The mirrored tint here darkened things a little while still keeping colours true, so if you like to see things as they are these will work for you (personally I quite like my goggles to brighten things up a little, especially on gloomy days, but the polarised version could be good for that, as well as increased clarity in open water).

There was a little visual distortion a the bottom of the lenses, similar to the Huubs, but overall the range of visibility was good. I also found the soft gaskets comfortable and the plastic extender along the side of the face (the same as the Tri-fit Propels) kept them secure and in place.

The strap is a flat split strap that worked well, with a single clip adjuster. Again there is a choice of nose bridges to help get the perfect fit. I didn't see any ingress, though they did take a little faffing around with to create the perfect seal on my face.

Finally, there's no case included which may be a positive if you are trying to reduce your use of plastic. I do like one though to avoid scratches!

91 %

VERDICT Classic goggle that is still a serious contender in the tri arena. Good price point in this test, too!

ZOGGS
SPECTRA £20

★★★★☆

zoggs.com

The Spectra is new from swim powerhouse Zoggs for 2025 and comes in a range of tints: blue, smoked and the clear tested here with frame options including blue and pink. As a range they don't feel like they are aimed at the masters or triathlete swimmers – they are a little too big to be a goggle I'd wear for competition, plus I'm not a fan of the look of these, personally.

That said though, they are competitive in price point and Zoggs have created a goggle which is very comfortable and has a superb range of vision (aside from that black part of the nose bridge, which is visible as you swim). They are insanely flexible too and the brand claim the dual density nose bridge can be twisted without leaking which proved true in testing. The strap is wide and comfy with dual side adjusters.

80 %

VERDICT Not the most stylish option but offer a larger pool goggle which is comfortable at a budget price.

SPEEDO
FASTSKIN SPEEDSOCKET 2
£43

★★★★½

speedo.com

The Speedsocket has been around for a while, but has been updated for this year to make it part of the 'Fastskin' range, which means an elongated side to the lenses and a sleeker, more low-profile look. Here the black and silver mirrored option is pretty simple, but there are other white/purple or white/amber options available online which feel a bit more modern.

Into the water and these fit as you would expect a classic pair of pool goggles to fit. Close to the socket with a good seal (which I can vouch for after a clumsy dive start in a race in these!), low profile gaskets and a dual strap with single clip. I did find these a little less comfortable than others on test around the gaskets though – plus the price felt a little high. 220

82 %

VERDICT Solid goggle though I found others on test offered better comfort. They won't let you down, though!

ESSENTIAL KIT

All you need to train & race, as rated by our 220 Kit Zone expert testers

TOP-END WETSUITS

If your goal is to exit T1 first, you'll want a suit that strikes the balance between flexibility, buoyancy and comfort, while also being super easy to remove on the fly.

Orca
Apex Flex
★★★★½
£589 Soft and flexible; ideal for good swimmers.
Issue 432
orca.com

Yonda
Ghost 3
★★★★½
£589 Impressive mix of flexibility and buoyancy.
Issue 417
yondasports.com

Sailfish
G-Range 8
★★★★★
£691 Unrivalled freedom and the fastest on test.
Issue 432
sailfish.com

Zone3
Vanquish X
★★★★½
£699 A dizzying array of tech put to good use.
Issue 432
zone3.com

Zoggs
Hypex Ultra FS
★★★★½
£700 Incredibly supple; improved hydrodynamics.
Issue 432
zoggs.com

BUDGET WETSUITS

Always try before you buy as sizes can vary massively between brands. Then consider your swim ability, as some features may be lost on newbies (e.g. thin neoprene and reduced buoyancy).

Van Rysel
SD Neoprene
★★★★☆
£119.99 A great option for shorter distances.
Issue 406
decathlon.co.uk

Lomo
Nuotare
★★★★☆
£125 Price, comfort and inclusive sizing combine.
Issue 422
lomo.co.uk

Speedo
Proton
★★★★½
£140 A crazy price for a suit that performs so well.
Issue 417
speedo.com

Zone3
Aspect
★★★★½
£179 Performs well and is breaststroke specific.
Issue 429
zone3.com

Orca
Athlex Float
★★★★½
£239 Great movement and buoyancy.
Issue 417
orca.com

POOL GOGGLES

When shopping for a new pair, consider tint to deal with bright lighting, width of vision and comfort to ensure a fuss-free swim.

Orca
Killa Speed
★★★★½
£17 Sleek goggles with a choice of nose bridges.
Issue 427
orca.com

Zoggs
Predator
★★★★½
£25 Great price and size range; no leaks or fogging.
Issue 427
zoggs.com

Tri-Fit
Rapid-X
★★★★½
£30 Superb visibility; soft and comfy gaskets.
Issue 427
tri-fitathletic.com

Roka
R1 Clear
★★★★½
£32 Superb all-round visibility. Great fit, too.
Issue 427
uk.roka.com

Zone3
Volare
★★★★½
£35 Great, comfy fit, plus polarised lenses.
Issue 427
zone3.com

OPEN-WATER GOGGLES

Outdoor swimming goggles should ideally have mirrored or polarised lenses for greater clarity. Often the lenses are bigger, too, for greater peripheral vision.

Orca
Killa Comfort
★★★★½
£24 Comfortable, great visibility and an impressive price. Good stuff.
Issue 430
orca.com

Zoggs
Predator Ultra
★★★★½
£38 A true classic and top performance from the polarized lenses.
Issue 430
zoggs.com

TheMagic5
Blue Mirror Gold
★★★★½
£75 Made-to-measure goggles that deliver near perfection.
Issue 430
themagic5.com

Aquasphere
Defy.Ultra
★★★★½
£129.99 Elevating swim masks to a new level. But at quite a price.
Issue 430
uk.aquasphereswim.com

Form
Smart Swim 2
★★★★½
£229 Unique tech that offers real benefits for pool and open water.
Issue 430
formswim.com

COLD-WATER SWIM KIT

Adding neoprene accessories can make your winter swimming much less biting, so consider swim caps, gloves and socks.

Lomo
Open Water Socks
★★★★☆
£21 Good breadth of sizing, plus appreciated grippers to avoid slipping.
Issue 425
lomo.co.uk

Orca
Thermal Cap
★★★★½
£35 Warm and plenty of flex; great thermal lining for the price.
Issue 425
orca.com

Zone3
Heat-Tech Gloves
★★★★½
£39 Toasty and great grip. Liquid-seal finish ensures snug fit.
Issue 425
zone3.com

Zone3
Heat-Tech Socks
★★★★½
£39 You can't argue with the warmth and waterproofing here.
Issue 425
zone3.com

2XU
Propel Gloves
★★★★½
£45 Cosy pair of gloves with superb grip. Just check the size fits you.
Issue 425
uk.2xu.com

For tonnes more tri kit, head to 220tri.com

TURBO TRAINERS

Turbo trainers range from the traditional A-frame design to smart trainers that sync to online training platforms like Zwift and Rouvy.

Tacx
Flow
★★★★☆
£299.99 Simple set up, impressively quiet and a great price.
Issue 426
garmin.com

Wahoo
Kickr Core
★★★★½
£549.99 Capable and quiet. Comes with 12 months of Zwift, too.
Issue 415
uk.wahoofitness.com

Saris
H3
★★★★½
£749.99 Feature packed and accurate. Often heavily discounted.
Issue 426
saris.com

Elite
Justo
★★★★☆
£999.99 'Flex Feet' provides a natural ride feel and relatively light at 17kg.
Issue 426
elite-it.com

Wahoo
Kickr Move
★★★★☆
£1,399.99 A very good high-end trainer, but needs tweaking. Pricey.
Issue 426
uk.wahoofitness.com

TRIATHLON BIKES

The key here is fit and comfort. Remember: the least aerodynamic thing on the bike is you, so have a bike fit to refine your position.

Argon 18
E119 Tri+ Disc
★★★★☆
£7,300 This is a fast, aggressive triathlon superbike with plenty of impressive innovation.
See 220triathlon.com
argon18.com

Orro
Venturi Tri
★★★★½
£5,950 Climbs purposefully, handles like a road bike and is pretty damn fast.
Issue 421
orrobikes.com

Cube
Aerium C:68X SLT
★★★★½
£8,999 A blisteringly fast, cutting-edge tri superbike with a bonus hydration option.
Issue 428
cube.eu

Canyon
Speedmax CFR Disc
★★★★★
£12,949 Blisteringly fast and the best integration we've seen on a triathlon bike.
Issue 388
canyon.com

Trek
Speed Concept SLR 9 AXS
★★★★½
£13,000 Fast and compliant, with disc brakes and all mod cons.
See 220triathlon.com
trekbikes.com

AEROBARS

You provide around 80% of the drag you endure on the bike. That's why a pair of clip-on aerobars is vital for a streamlined performance.

Van Rysel
Aptonia
★★★★☆
£39.99 Incredible-value aerobars that though aimed at long distance are better for short course.
Issue 431
decathlon.co.uk

BBB
Aerobase
★★★★☆
£64.95 Well-shaped extensions and range make these a smart clip-on introduction.
Issue 420
bbbcycling.com

Profile Design
Sonic Ergo 39A
★★★★☆
£149.99 Versatile, good-value clip-ons that are easily fitted. A multitude of configurations.
Issue 431
profile-design-eu.com

Profile Design
Subsonic Ergo 35A
★★★★½
£179.99 Great for those looking to go very low, but standard Sonics have broader appeal.
Issue 420
profile-design-eu.com

Deda
Elementi Superzero Extensions
★★★★☆
£207.99 Well-crafted and lightweight. Their stubby design isn't for all.
Issue 420
dedaelementi.com

TRI BIKE SHOES

Triathlon bike shoes are subtly, but importantly, different than cycling shoes as they contain features for a swift transition. Heel loop, rapid closure system and sole drainage holes are some of the multisport features.

Van Rysel
Aptonia
★★★½☆
£79.99 A solid shoe and a good price, though the jury's out regarding the closure zipper.
Issue 428
decathlon.co.uk

Mavic
Cosmic Elite Tri
★★★★½
£165 Comfortable shape, fine closure system and nice big pull tab for fast transitions.
Issue 428
mavic.com

DMT
KT1
★★★★½
£249.99 Phenomenal comfort, impressive breathability and very supportive.
Issue 428
chickencyclekit.co.uk

Fizik
Transiro Hydra Aeroweave Carbon
★★★★½
£289.99 A fine shoe with numerous tri-friendly features, but pricey.
Issue 428
fizik.com

Mavic
Ultimate Tri
★★★★☆
£385 Wonderfully stiff and breathable shoe but cost hard to justify for the majority.
Issue 428
mavic.com

HELMETS

Helmets are divided into road, aero road and aero. Each has its attributes, from greater ventilation to lowering drag. Note: if you go full-on aero, those benefits are lost if you can't maintain an aero position.

Van Rysel
FCR
★★★★½
£89.99 Solid aero performance and plenty of race-friendly features.
Issue 431
decathlon.co.uk

Met
Estro MIPS
★★★★☆
£120 A lean and stylish mid-range lid with added safety benefits.
Issue 412
met-helmets.com

Giro
Eclipse Spherical
★★★★½
£239.99 Great fitting mechanism and slick dial for a comfy fit.
Issue 431
giro.com

Specialized
S-Works Evade 3
★★★★½
£250 Fast, streamlined and comfortable. One of the best out there.
Issue 431
specialized.com

Abus
Gamechanger 2
★★★★☆
£289 One of the safest helmets out there plus solid aero credentials.
Issue 431
upgradebikes.co.uk

ESSENTIAL KIT

HEADPHONES

Sound quality's integral to any set of headphones but, when it comes to triathlon, safety plays a big part, too. Cue bone-conduction headphones, plus options for swimming.

Shokz
OpenRun
★★★★★
£129.95 Quality option that lets you hear the surrounding area, too.
Issue 403
uk.shokz.com

H2O
Audio Sonar Pro
★★★★½
£147 Swim- specific option with great sound and comfort.
Issue 422
h2oaudio.com

Suunto
Wing
★★★★☆
£169 Solid sound for an out-of-ear headphone; LED lights boost visibility.
Issue 425
suunto.com

Shokz
OpenSwim
★★★★☆
£169.95 Another swim-specific pair that does a solid job.
Issue 422
uk.shokz.com

Shokz
OpenFit
★★★★½
£179 Great sound and comfy, but easier to hear surroundings with others.
Issue 423
uk.shokz.com

TRAIL RUNNING SHOES

A good trail shoe features a breathable upper to aid drainage. Good traction's also vital for staying upright on undulating and muddy terrain.

Nike
Pegasus Trail 4
★★★★☆
£129.95 Flexible and decent traction, albeit not aggressive enough for proper muddy trails.
Issue 425
sportsshoes.com

Saucony
Peregrine 13
★★★★½
£130 If you're looking for an all-rounder that offers good value and decent performance, this is it.
Issue 425
saucony.com

Inov-8
Roclite G 275 V2
★★★★½
£135 A bulletproof trail shoe that's well-suited to wintery conditions and offers reasonable value.
Issue 425
inov-8.com

La Sportiva
Cyklon
★★★★½
£170 A wonderful, technical trail shoe with great traction and the reliable BOA dial.
Issue 425
lasportiva.com

Hoka
Tecton X 2
★★★★½
£185 An enjoyable, propulsive yet stable ride, though not perfect in deep, wet mud.
Issue 425
hoka.com

MILEAGE RUN SHOES

Your off-season running should include a weekly long run for aerobic conditioning, albeit don't forget occasional speedwork. All of these should fit the bill.

Inov8
Roadfly
★★★★½
£100 If you are after the same connection you feel on the trail on the road, this is for you.
Issue 435
inov8.com

Nike
Pegasus 41
★★★★½
£128.99 A reliable option for easy miles, as long as you don't mind the high heel-to-toe drop.
Issue 435
sportshoes.com

Brooks
Ghost 2 Max
★★★★★
£145 A reliable, super comfortable and robust shoe that will do wonders for your road running.
Issue 435
brooksrunning.com

New Balance
Fresh Foam 1080
★★★★★
£160 The Fresh Foam 1080 is an excellent shoe for racking up gentle miles in supreme comfort.
Issue 435
newbalance.co.uk

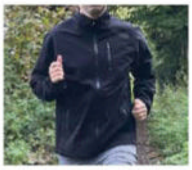
Saucony
Endorphin Speed 4
★★★★★
£180 A versatile, comfy and impressive shoe that's primed for pushing the pace and easy runs.
Issue 435
saucony.com

RUN JACKETS

A good run jacket will fend off the elements like wind and rain, but also deliver breathability so you don't boil in the bag. Reflectives, a hood and pockets add to its usefulness.

Keela
Saxon Jacket
★★★★☆
£109.95 Versatile and well-priced jacket, but not one for hotter or high-tempo runs.
Issue 436
keelaoutdoors.com

Montane
Cetus Lite
★★★★☆
£270 Great for deflecting winds and rain, but more for hiking than for running.
Issue 436
montane.com



Soar
All-weather jacket
★★★★½
£350 It's hard to ignore that price, but this is a formidable jacket for battling the weather.
Issue 436
salomon.com

Asics
Core jacket
★★★★½
£54 Lightweight, affordable and stylish, but not for running in really wet conditions.
Issue 436
asics.com

INOV-8
Performance Hybrid
★★★★½
£150 A well-crafted, durable and comfortable jacket. Huge versatility makes the price a bargain.
Issue 436
inov8.com

HEART RATE MONITORS

These chest or armband straps are more accurate than wrist-based optic sensors on watches. Many can be used independently or linked to a watch or smartphone.

Wahoo
Tickr
★★★★½
£39.99 Superb training tool with great connectivity and all for under £40.
Issue 435
uk.wahoofitness.com

Coros
Heart Rate Monitor
★★★½☆
£69 Straps to your arm for proven accuracy but arguably could offer more features.
Issue 435
uk.coros.com

Wahoo
Trackr
★★★★☆
£79.99 Accurate and comfy chest strap that can be recharged, but that does mean another cable.
Issue 435
uk.wahoofitness.com

Polar
H10
★★★★½
£86.50 Excellent accuracy and extremely quick to connect. Comfortable, too.
Issue 435
polar.com

Garmin
Pro Plus
★★★★☆
£119.99 Impressive chest strap that'll appeal to existing Garmin users for multisport action.
Issue 410
garmin.com

For tonnes more tri kit, head to 220tri.com

MULTISPORT WATCHES

Tech evolution's seen computers shrink to watch size. As such, you can expect GPS, heart rate, sleep measurements and a whole lot more, starting from about £200.

Coros
Pace 3
★★★★½
£219 Swift GPS, huge battery life and a wonderful price. A fine effort from Coros.
Issue 422
uk.coros.com

Garmin
Forerunner 265
★★★★½
£429.99 Great AMOLED screen displays a wealth of useful training and racing information.
Issue 422
garmin.com

Suunto
Race
★★★★½
£479 Fantastic multisport watch that comes in at a very good price point.
Issue 425
suunto.com

Apple
Watch Ultra 2
★★★★☆
£799 Apple's sport offerings continue to improve. But it'll strike your bank account.
Issue 424
apple.com

Garmin
Fenix 8
★★★★½
£949.99 Yes, that's a mortgage-threatening price but this watch packs everything and more.
Issue 435
garmin.com

TRI-SUITS

Tri-suits are vital as you can wear them from gun to finish. They should shed water nicely after exiting T1, contain a comfy chamois for the bike and be flexible come the run. Pockets are also useful.

Zone3
Activate+
★★★★½
£115 Great breathability, seam construction and internal lining cranks up this suit''s comfort.
Issue 430
zone3.com

Raceskin
Aero
★★★★½
£130 An impressive mix of tecnology and comfort at a very impressive price point.
Issue 430
raceskin.co.uk

NoPinz
Pro-1 Evo
★★★★½
£184.99 A well-priced, comfy and aero suit in multiple sizing options. A fine, fine suit.
Issue 431
nopinz.com

Zoot
Ultra Triathlon P1
★★★★½
£292 A superb suit that really excels in the heat and humidity. Might need bigger pad for Ironman.
Issue 431
zootsports.co.uk

Castelli
PR 2 Speedsuit
★★★★½
£360 A highly technical, speedy and supple suit… if you can afford the high price tag.
Issue 431
castelli-cycling.com

ENERGY GELS

These sachets of energy are useful for all disciplines, but especially the run as they're easily stowed. Many contain a mix of glucose and fructose to deliver more energy.

HIGH5
ENERGY GEL

High5
Electrolyte Energy Gel
★★★★☆
£1.45 A great-value energy gel that delivers with no airs or graces.
Issue 422
highfive.co.uk

GO ISOTONIC ENERGY
SiS

SiS
Go Isotonic Gel
★★★★☆
£1.67 The original isotonic gel and one that stands the test of time. Berry flavour is our pick.
Issue 422
scienceinsport.com

Torq
Cola Caffeine Gel
★★★★☆
£2.15 The caffeine version delivers a performance boost without sacrificing taste.
Issue 422
torqfitness.com

GEL
30
CARB
PRECISION FUEL

Precision
Fuel Original Gel
★★★★½
£2.25 Great consistency, appreciated neutral taste and packs away neatly.
Issue 422
precisionhydration.com

MAURTEN
GEL 100 CAF 100

Maurten
Gel 100 Caf 100
★★★★☆
£3.21 Hydrogel formulation settles smoothly, albeit this is one costly energy hit.
Issue 422
maurten.com

SUNGLASSES

Arguably, these should be termed 'performance eyewear' as they should be worn year-round to protect from dirt flicking up from your mate's rear wheel. Wraparound models are common for great and clear peripheral vision.

Tifosi
Vogel SL
★★★★☆
£54.99 Great price for comfortable sunglasses that boost contrasts well and stay in place.
Issue 432
tifosi-optics.co.uk

Sungod
Airas
★★★★½
£140 Impressive sunglasses with class-leading field of view, but not infallible in direct light.
Issue 432
sungod.co

Smith
Motive
★★★★½
£160 If they fit you well, these are exceptional sunglasses that excel on the bike and run.
Issue 432
smithoptics.com

Koo
Alibi
★★★★☆
£169.99 Stylish, secure and great field of vision, but no case and others better in super bright light.
Issue 432
kooworld.cc

Roka
GP-1X
★★★★☆
£230 Add an extra lens for low light and these would be best on test, but they don't come cheap.
Issue 432
uk.roka.com

ELECTROLYTE TABS/ POWDERS

You lose magnesium and potassium when you sweat, plus sodium, which channels water into muscles. This lot replaces them.

Phizz
3-in-1 Formula
★★★★☆
£7.99 for 20 Not sport-specific but still 317mg sodium, plus other vitamins and minerals.
Issue 421
phizz.co

SiS
Hydro
★★★★☆
£8 for 20 Palatable offering that delivers a range of electrolytes including 345mg sodium.
Issue 421
scienceinsport.com

PRECISION
1000

Precision
Hydration 1000
★★★★½
£8.99 for 10 1,000mg sodium will suit many, but 500mg and 1,500mg options available.
Issue 421
precisionhydration.com

Skratch
Labs Hydration
★★★★☆
£27.95 for 20 Sodium content comes in at 380mg. Tastes good, but not cheap.
Issue 421
silverfish-uk.com

STYRKR
SLT
Caffeine+

Styrkr
SLT05 Caffeine+
★★★½☆
£9.99 for six Solid product with 360mg sodium, but minimal caffeine content.
Issue 421
styrkr.com

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OCTOBER 2023
VOL XLVI NO. XI

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

"Let them be left, wildness and wet; Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet."
GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

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Your Perfect Walking Weekend in Keswick

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+ 5 Flasks Tried and Tested

The Lake District Trek That's (A Bit) Like the Alps

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SCOT 121 PUT

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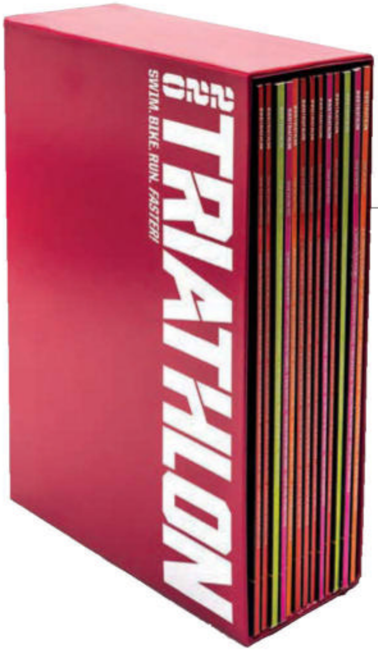
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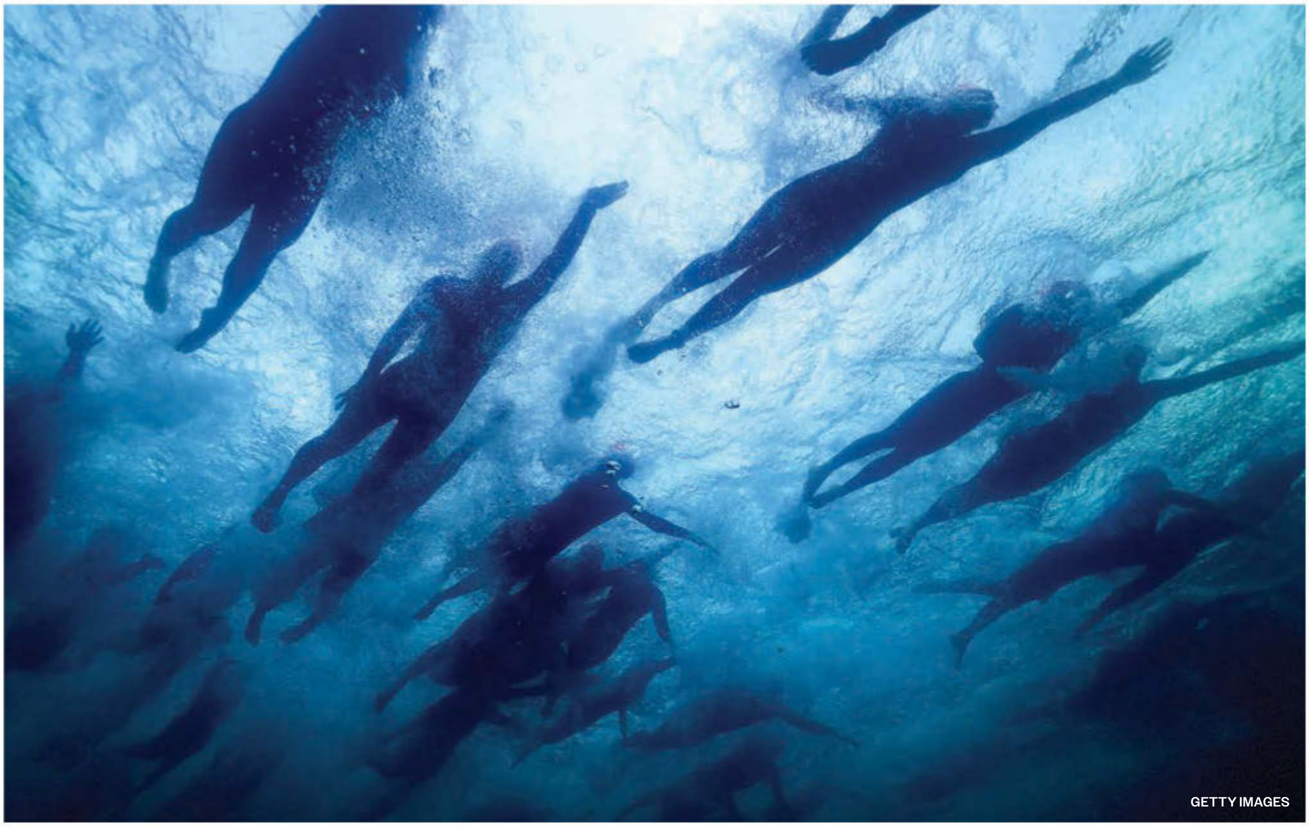
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GAIN THE EDGE IN OPEN WATER SWIMMING

HELEN WEBSTER
As well as being 220's Editor, Helen is also a qualified Level 2 Open-Water Swim Coach and RLSS Lifeguard trainer.

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HEALTHY HOMEMADE TAKEAWAYS

KATE PERCY
is a food for fitness expert and amateur athlete She's written three books on sports nutrition and founded Go Bites

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YOUR TRAINING QUESTIONS

ANDREW SHEAFF, JACK EVANS, KATE MILSON & HELEN WEBSTER
Our experts answer Qs on calorie burn, chafing, running uphill and swim fins.

RACE SMART IN OPEN WATER

GAINING THE EDGE IN A TRIATHLON SWIM ISN'T ALL ABOUT SPEED…

WORDS HELEN WEBSTER **IMAGES** GETTY IMAGES

Survive or thrive? When it comes to open-water swimming for triathlon, there are two camps of thought. The competitors who just want to get through it without losing too much time (or swallowing too much water) and the competitors who want to make the most of every advantage to have a good start to their race.

There's no doubting that the open water is the element of triathlon that can cause the most trepidation, but the good news? You don't need to be an amazing swimmer to gain the edge. Making the most of what you've got is the key, so whether it's choosing the best kit for your event or practising how you approach the course markers, marginal gains are in reach for every swimmer.

So a confession: despite being an open-water swim coach, I'm not a super-speedy swimmer. I'm just not wired that way – endurance is my thing. But I've had some pretty nifty performances in triathlon swims over the years which are down to getting my open water skills nailed and playing to my strengths.

One thing to remember: the swim might be the shortest part of the race, but it starts your day off and mentally, you want to go into your race feeling confident. While a few nerves are natural and can give you that boost of energy you need to race, you don't want to be panicking as you enter the water. Plus, have a swim which is a performance you're pleased with and which you've executed in a way that sees you enter transition without having torched through your energy levels and you'll be set up to have a strong bike and run performance.

Ready to get started? Turn the page for 10 tips that can help you get the edge in open water… ▸

MEET THE EXPERT

HELEN WEBSTER

As well as being *220*'s Editor, Helen is also a qualified Level 2 Open-Water Swim Coach focusing on confidence and runs regular workshops at the South West Maritime Academy near Bristol. She is also an RLSS UK Open Water Lifeguard trainer/assessor.

10 WAYS TO GAIN THE EDGE IN OPEN WATER

Ready to race faster? Here's what you need to do...

01 **Choose your race carefully.** If you want to put in the best performance you can, then try to enter a triathlon with a swim that plays to the strengths you have built in training. For example if you live in a landlocked area and train in a lake, then one of the coastal races may not be for you, as you'll have to get accustomed to waves, currents and salt water ahead of event day.

02 **Find out what kind of race start the event has and practise it!** The easiest start is a rolling start (where you walk into the water and start swimming, more common since lockdown and changes in race protocols) but many races will have a deep water mass start. They key here? Get into a good position before the gun goes. Tread water by sculling with your arms with your body tipped forward so you can start swimming from a more horizontal position (much easier than going into it from a vertical position). Scull with wide hands at the front, as this will create space and stop other swimmers positioning too close to you!

▼ Practise the race start you will have in your triathlon to gain the edge.

03 **Choose the right spot.** On that note, if starting with lots of other swimmers around you, then choose your position tactically. Faster swimmers will be at the front and you don't want to be there as you'll likely get swum over. Start too near the back though and you could end up getting stuck behind slow swimmers. As a middle-pack swimmer the key is to place yourself behind swimmers that will be slightly quicker, so you can draft and get some free speed. Plus if you are nervous, put yourself off to one side where you are more likely to get clear water – and on the outside of the buoys, so you don't get pinched as the pack converges on a turn.

04 **Embrace the chaos.** I mean this in a good way! Swimming with other triathletes in training will really help you come race day, as you need to get used to other arms and legs being around you in the water and practising this will take the fear out of it. I play a game with my swimmers where they start in a pack and one (faster) swimmer has to make their way through the middle of the group. It keeps everyone swimming close and leads to some healthy competition!

05 **Think about your goggles.** They might be a less considered purchase for many swimmers, which is a mistake. You want goggles that fit you well without leaking and don't fog up, as both these things will impair your vision and slow you down. Find a shape that allows good peripheral vision and pick your

lenses according to the likely water and weather conditions. Photochromatic lenses are a good shout if conditions may be changeable – dazzling low sunlight at early race starts can catch many athletes out!

06 Take care with your wetsuit.

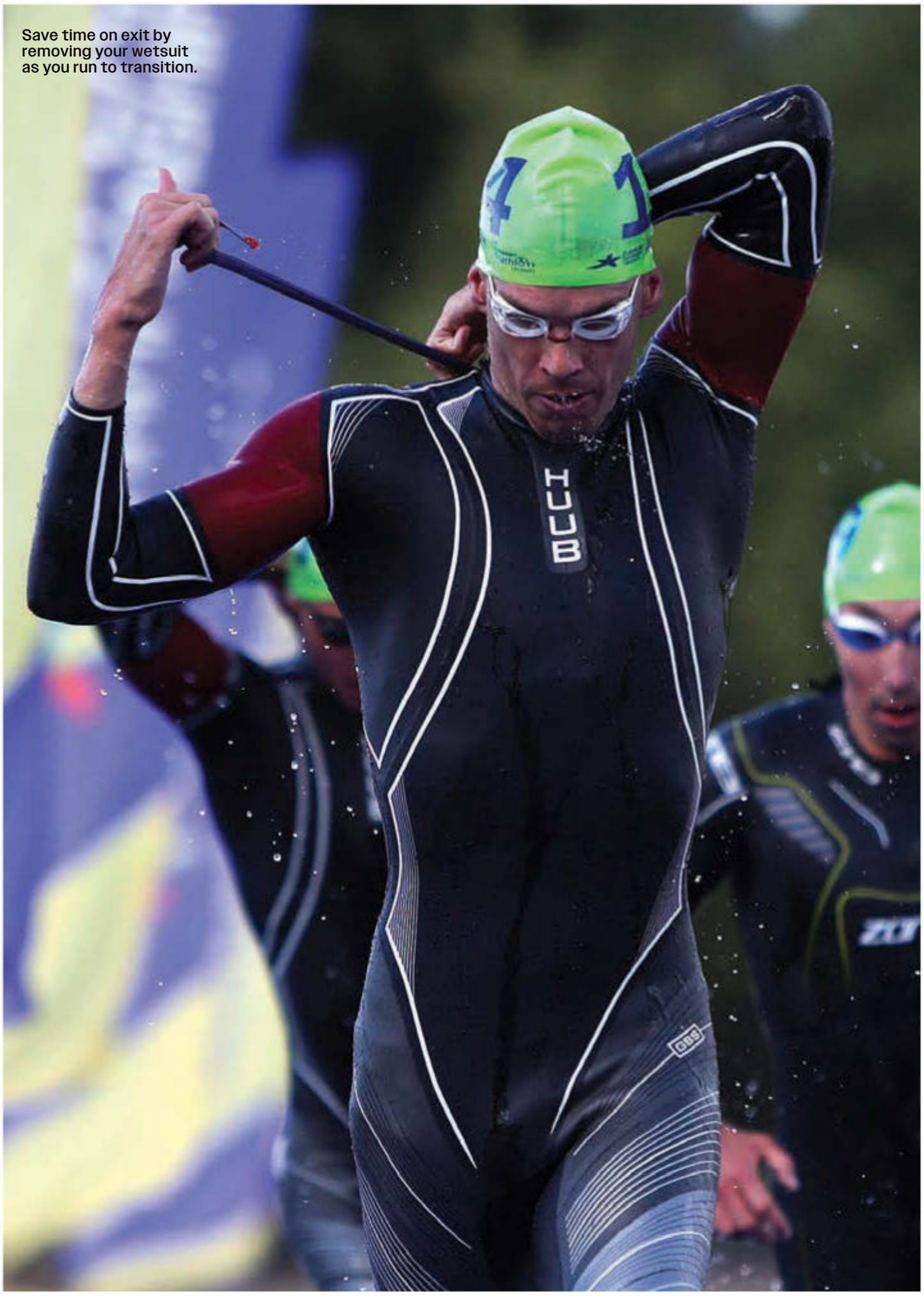
On the subject of kit, allow plenty of time to put your wetsuit on before you begin. Rushing to get into your neoprene can lead to nicks and tears, but also can mean you don't get the stretch and flexibility needed. There's no point investing in a speedy tri wetsuit if you don't put it on properly. Ensure the zip is fully secured, too.

07 Swim in a straight line

One of the most common mistakes open-water swimmers make is not ensuring them are swimming straight. Whether through poor technique (snaking or weaving as you swim) or through not sighting and keeping an eye on the course, you can easily add metres to your swim distance if you're not taking the shortest route to each buoy. Practise at your local venue and if you are swimming wonky, ask a friend to watch you. Common mistakes include crossing arms at the front of the stroke which can lead to pushing water 'out' alongside you rather than 'back' behind you. Think of your hands like paddles steering a boat!

08 Learn to sight

Sighting sounds a lot more complicated than it is. To sight, you want to just take a tiny glimpse forward to make sure you are staying on course. Keep it as small as you can, as lifting your head can create a see-saw effect and make your legs sink, creating drag – think 'crocodile eyes!'. Practise this little glimpse at various points of the stroke. To be most efficient, try and sight just before or after a breath.


Save time on exit by removing your wetsuit as you run to transition.

09 Recce the course

Another good tip – if you can recce the course (on the land or in water) the day before that will help you. Get to know where you will be swimming and make sure the details of the course are clear in your mind. It can be handy to find sighting points taller than the course buoys too, such as buildings or trees (something immovable!) as these will be easier to see from the water, especially with other swimmers, splash and waves around you. Check things like currents and water temperature too, so you are prepared for everything you will experience.

10 Save time on exit

Think you're going to leave the water quickly, emerging strongly and pulling your wetsuit off as you go to save time in transition..? After time horizontal in water, especially over longer swims, you can be little wobbly, something which will be made much worse if there's an unstable or uneven surface under foot. So make sure you practise the little things in training, too! 220

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THOMAS WOOD

BECOME PART OF THE GROWING *220* COMMUNITY BY SUBSCRIBING TODAY! *p20*

NEXT MONTH

On sale – 23 May

ALISTAIR BROWNLEE

Retirement? What retirement? GB's iconic athlete tells us about the launch of Truefuels, training for fun and being busier than ever…

SIX MONTHS TO IRONMAN

Yes, you can still achieve greatness this year! Join us on a journey through training, nutrition and tactics

ON TEST

Entry-level tri-suits reviewed ready for the start of race season. Plus, Canyon's new road bike

RUN FASTER

Top tips on going from zero to hero with GB elite runner Anya Culling

NUTRITION

HEALTHY HOMEMADE TAKEAWAYS

Struggling to give up your Deliveroo..? There could be a healthier way. Here's Kate Percy with four homemade versions of classic takeaways

IMAGES THE SECRET STUDIO

Everyone loves a good takeaway, right? But making your own is often cheaper, more convenient and far more nutritious. Here's how…

A combination of my personal favourites and Britain's favourite takeaways – what's not to like about this month's brief?! What has surprised me, however, is that with a little 'Go Faster' treatment, these homemade 'takeaways' are packed with goodness and are great additions to the training diet.

Firstly, a take on my current go-to take-out – Chilli prawn ramen. Deliciously fresh and nutritious, this main meal soup takes minutes to make and is perfect for post long-run muscle recovery and replenishing electrolytes lost through sweat. ▸

It’s low in fat, rich in protein and carbohydrate and packed with vitamins, minerals, sodium and anti-inflammatory ingredients, such as garlic, chilli and ginger.

Next up, is a very colourful and nutritious Sweet & sour chicken, which takes the rainbow diet to another level. Including a wide range of colours in your diet ensures that you take on board a greater variety of nutrients to help you stay on top of your health when training intensively. Chop and stir-fry this in a matter of minutes.

I couldn’t write about takeaways without including a pizza. With a melt-in-the-mouth protein- packed base and nutritious topping of sustaining chilli beans, spinach, lycopene-packed tomatoes and mozzarella, this Chilli bean pizza makes a perfect mid-week training meal.

I guarantee this Cheat’s chicken tikka masala will be prepared quicker than the average takeaway version, and is fresher, tastier and more nutritious. Packed with spices, ginger and garlic to promote recovery, enjoy with brown basmati rice or naan bread for a nicely balanced post-training meal.

Sports nutrition cook and keen amateur athlete Kate Percy set up the #GoFaster campaign in 2009 and, following the publication of several sports nutrition books, now produces a range of all-natural energy balls, Go Bites (katepercys.com).

CHILLI PRAWN RAMEN

PREP 5mins **COOK** 5mins **SERVES** 4

INGREDIENTS • 1 tbsp sunflower oil • 1 pack raw, peeled prawns • 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced • 2cm piece fresh ginger, thinly sliced • 100g baby corn • 1.2 litres chicken stock • 4 spring onions, chopped into 3 cm lengths • 2 heads of pak choi, chopped • 1 tsp chilli paste • 1 tbsp soy sauce • 1-2 tbsps Thai fish sauce • 1 tbsp brown sugar • 2 tsps lime juice • 300g instant noodles • 200g beansprouts • 25g fresh coriander • A few drops of sesame oil • 1 red chilli, finely sliced • Handful of salted cashew nuts

METHOD

1 Cook the noodles according to pack instructions and drain. Heat the oil in a wok over a high heat. Add the prawns and sauté for 2mins. Stir in the garlic, ginger and corn.

2 Add the stock, spring onions and pak choi. Bring to the boil, then lower heat and simmer for 1min. Add the chilli paste, soy sauce, fish sauce, brown sugar and lime juice.

3 Divide the noodles between four large soup bowls. Ladle over the soup. Top with the beansprouts, fresh coriander, red chilli, cashews and sesame oil.

CHILLI BEAN PIZZA

PREP 5mins **COOK** 8-10mins **SERVES** 1

INGREDIENTS • 100g flour • ½ tsp baking powder • Pinch of salt • 1 tbsp olive oil • 65g natural yoghurt • 2 tbsps tomato purée • ½ can kidney beans in chilli sauce • 1 tsp chilli flakes • 1 tsp mixed herbs • 10 black olives, pitted • 3-4 anchovies • Handful spinach • 1 fresh mozzarella • 1 red chilli, deseeded and sliced thinly

METHOD

1 Heat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl. Add the oil and yoghurt and stir with a fork until it forms a doughy ball. Knead on a floured surface for 2mins and roll into a thin round. Combine the purée, chilli beans & flakes and herbs and add to the base. Add the olives, mozzarella and anchovies. Bake for 8-10mins. Top with spinach and red chilli.

CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA

PREP 2mins **COOK** 15mins **SERVES** 4

INGREDIENTS • 1 tbsp sunflower oil • 2 onions, roughly chopped • 1 tsp salt • 1 tsp cumin seeds • 1 tsp fenugreek seeds (optional) • 5 tbsps tikka masala paste • 2 red peppers, cubed • 1 tsp grated ginger • 1 clove garlic, crushed • 2 red chillis, deseeded, finely sliced • 4 free-range skinless chicken breasts, cut into 2cm chunks • 4 tbsps tomato purée • 100ml coconut cream • 200ml natural yogurt • Chopped coriander leaves, lime wedges, cashew nuts, naan or rice to serve

METHOD

1 Heat the oil in a deep frying pan and sauté the onions gently for 10mins. Stir in the salt, cumin and fenugreek seeds and cook for 1min. Stir in the paste. Add the red peppers, garlic, ginger and chillis, then add the chicken pieces, stirring well to coat with the paste.

2 Add the purée, coconut cream and 200ml water. Cover with a lid and gently simmer for 5mins. Turn off the heat, leave for 1min. Stir in the yoghurt and some lime juice, season, then serve with coriander, nuts, lime and naan/rice.

SWEET & SOUR CHICKEN

PREP 5mins **COOK** 15mins **SERVES** 4

INGREDIENTS • 400g brown basmati rice • 2 tbsps soft brown sugar • 4 tbsps white wine vinegar • 454g can unsweetened pineapple chunks with juice • 2 tbsps tomato ketchup • 2 tbsps soy sauce • 3 cm fresh ginger, grated • 1 clove garlic, finely sliced • 1 tbsp cornflour • 1 tsp salt • 1 tsp five spice powder • 400g skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into 2cm cubes • 2 tbsps sunflower oil • 4 spring onions, cut into 3cm lengths • 1 red, 1 yellow, 1 green pepper, cut into chunks • 25g fresh coriander

METHOD

1 Cook the rice according to pack instructions. In a saucepan dissolve the sugar in the vinegar over a gentle heat. Add the pineapple, juice, ketchup and soy sauce. Bring to the boil. Add the ginger and garlic. Simmer gently until the sauce starts to thicken. Set aside.

2 Combine the cornflour, salt and five spice and coat the chicken. Pre-heat a wok to very hot. In 1 tbsp of oil, fry the chicken until crispy. Transfer to a plate.

3 Add 1 tbsp oil. Stir-fry the spring onion and peppers for 2mins. Add the chicken and stir in the sauce, simmer for 2mins or until the chicken is cooked and the sauce glossy and thick. Sprinkle with coriander & serve with the rice.

Q: I LOVE SWIMMING WITH FINS, BUT ARE THEY HELPING ME IMPROVE MY SWIM TECHNIQUE?

Andrew Cashell

ANDREW SHEAFF

US swim coach Andrew Sheaff has been helping people of all ages improve their swimming for over 20 years. He specialises in coaching triathletes to help improve their swimming skills through online coaching.

A As improving your swimming skill can be a real challenge, you want to know every trick in the book to help you learn skills faster and easier. In this article, I'm going to show you two different ways that you can use fins to help take your swimming to the next level. Ironically, using fins is a great way to slow down your progress if used in the wrong way. I'll help you avoid those mistakes by showing you the best ways to use your fins.

Drill With Fins

When you're learning a new drill, or really trying to perfect a familiar one, there's a lot to manage and focus on. This is particularly true when you're moving slowly through the water and your legs are sinking! The simple solution is to start wearing fins during some of your drilling, allowing you to put your focus where it really matters. For instance, instead of using a buoy in some common drills, throw on fins. You'll get the benefit of keeping the hips up like a buoy, and you'll get the benefit of a speed boost from your legs.

However, once you get the hang of the drill, make sure you do most of your drilling without fins. You'll need to perfect your skills without the fins, as that's how you'll be racing. So, think of your fins as a learning accelerator, best used when you're just starting with a drill. Once they've served their purpose, it's best to drill without them. That is until you find a new drill you want to perfect!

Go Fast

I'm sure you remember the first time you drove a car on the motorway. It was happening so fast! Nowadays, it's just business as usual, and when you get off the motorway, it's like going in slow motion. The same thing happens when you swim. When you swim faster than normal, it's chaos. After a little practice at high speed, normal speed feels pedestrian. You can take advantage of this same phenomenon to improve your swimming skills.

Put on a pair of fins and practice swimming faster than normal, really paying attention to how you're moving through water. Pick one skill that you're working on and really focus on it. Don't worry if it's happening too fast! Perform several repetitions. You can do this for some really short sprints, or you can perform medium length repetitions. Afterwards, take off the fins and perform repetitions at a normal speed. You'll be pleasantly surprised that everything is moving in slow motion, and you'll feel like you have a lot more control over what you're doing, and a lot more time to make it happen. It's a fun way to improve your swimming.

"Instead of using a buoy in some common drills, pull on a set of find instead"

GETTY IMAGES

GETTY IMAGES

> *"Away from the men and women in white coats, you can estimate calorie burn with simple tools"*

Q: HOW MANY CALORIES DOES CYCLING BURN??

Mark Faring

JACK EVANS

Jack is an NCTJ-trained freelance sports journalist. He's worked for the Kyiv Post, SWNS press agency and BikeRadar. A runner turned cyclist, Jack loves a challenge on the bike, whether that's a 300km audax or steep hill climb race.

A Knowing how many calories cycling burns enables you to more closely match your energy intake and expenditure to maximise performance and manage weight. Scientists use calories to measure the quantity of energy in food and drink. We use this energy to keep our body functioning as it should and move when we exercise.

Without access to a laboratory, it's impossible to calculate our calorie expenditure particularly accurately. But using different methods, we can estimate how many calories we burn.

In scientific trials, researchers use a technique called direct calorimetry to calculate calorie burn. A mask over the participant's face captures the gas they expel and analyses the content of it to approximate how many calories they are using.

The doubly labelled water method, which estimates calorie expenditure by recording someone's excretion of water containing a detectable isotope, doesn't have to be conducted in a lab. A research team led by Jose L. Areta from Liverpool John Moore University used this technique to estimate a professional cyclist's energy balance during the 2023 Tour de France Femmes. However, it's not believed to be as accurate as direct calorimetry.

Away from the women and men in white coats, you can estimate how many calories your bike ride burns with simpler tools.

Convert from kilojoules

The best power meters will estimate the number of calories burned while cycling by recording your mechanical work in kilojoules. Because we are only about 25 per cent efficient at converting energy from food into force at the pedals (much energy is wasted in heat production), one kilojoule is equivalent to one calorie burned.

In the same way, the power meter integrated into the best turbo trainers will also record kilojoules and your calorie expenditure while cycling indoors.

Using a power meter is much less accurate than the more scientific methods described above. It makes assumptions about your mechanical efficiency and the accuracy of your power meter. If either or both of these are out, the calorie burn estimation could differ by 1,000 calories from the actual expenditure on a long bike ride.

Wear a heart-rate monitor

You can also get an idea of how many calories cycling burns by a heart-rate monitor.

Bike computers and ride-tracking apps, like Strava, estimate your cycling calorie expenditure by feeding your average heart rate during a ride into their own algorithm.

The main downside is that these algorithms are based on population averages and penalises fitter athletes. If cyclist A rides at 250 watts at 130 beats per minute (bpm) and cyclist B holds 200 watts at 130bpm, the algorithm will spit out a similar total calorie burn for each.

However, because cyclist A has ridden at a higher absolute intensity, they will have expended more energy. As a result, these generic heart-rate algorithms can undercount calorie burn by 3-20 per cent, according to a 2019 study by the Université Libre de Bruxelles.

You should, as these Belgium researchers did, use a chest-strap heart-rate monitor because fitness trackers and GPS multisport watches are even less accurate.

That said, these devices are likely to have become better at measuring heart rate and estimating calorie expenditure in recent years.

Estimate from MET values

Without power or heart-rate measurement, you can estimate how many calories you burn while cycling using an online calorie calculator. Most of these calorie calculators use MET units, your resting metabolic rate (the energy you use in a day without exercise) and exercise duration.

Calorie expenditure = resting metabolic rate x MET x (duration in hours divided by 24)

Different types of ride have different MET values. See 220triathlon.com for a guide.

GETTY IMAGES

Q: HOW TO RUN UPHILL

Ann Bard

KATE MILSON

Kate is *220*'s former staff writer. She's a keen endurance triathlete, marathon runner, and bikepacker and her interests include cycling, nutrition and sports injury.

A We get it, running uphill isn't everyone's favourite part of a race or run route. But with the right training, you can smash your next hilly race and even enjoy the challenge that comes with the extra elevation.

The best way to train for a hilly running course is to mimic the same conditions in your training as much as possible. If you're limited on time, consider switching out your next interval session for some hill reps.

Or if you're a complete beginner to the joys of hill climbing, then why not start slowly with a run/walk session up your local hill? Getting to the stage where you're running comfortably up steep inclines may seem daunting, or nigh on impossible, but the hardest point is that first step.

Before you start smashing your hilly runs with abandon, you'll want to get down pat the best and most efficient uphill running form. Unlike running on the flat, you'll need to lift your knees higher with each stride to account for the sloped ground. Shorten your stride and try to keep a neutral spine standing tall with an ever so slight forward lean, just avoid leaning backward.

For short and particularly steep stretches, or if you're looking to maintain a good pace, stick to the balls of your feet and engage the glutes and calves to power through. This is quite a strain for the muscles though, so for longer and more gradual hills, try to hit a steady pace and rely more on the glutes. For these longer efforts, try to get a hold of your breathing and where possible, breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. This will encourage you to remain in an aerobic, endurance state.

As you run uphill, your arms act as great aids propelling you forward. Increase your arm swings at your sides to match your shorter, quicker steps and just focus on each breath at a time until you reach the top.

It's perfectly normal to have difficulties running uphill. After all, it's far harder than running on the flat. The additional elevation puts more strain on the body and requires more effort and strength.

> ***"The only way to get better at running uphill is to – drunroll please – run up hills!"***

If you don't typically tackle hills in your weekly runs, then you won't be used to taking them on and may not have the required balance and strength needed.

As we've mentioned before, the only way to truly get better at running uphill, is to – drumroll please – run up hills. Running uphill requires good balance provided by strong glutes and core, and strong legs used to the effort. You also need to have good endurance and last but not least, a strong mental attitude to keep runniing during tough uphill efforts.

How do I become a stronger uphill runner?

How to run uphill without getting tired is the question on most runners' lips. Running uphill efficiently and with ease requires strong glutes, core, and leg muscles. Improve your short–

twitch muscular strength with interval and hill rep sessions, while overall strength and conditioning for running can be worked on in the gym.

Look to practice single-leg stability and strength exercises like: single leg deadlift, Bulgarian split squats, single-leg squats, lunges, and bosu ball exercises. While core exercises and holistic movements like the deadlift and barbell squat can also be beneficial. If you're new to the gym, just be sure to ease yourself in slowly and seek advice from gym personnel on the correct form and use of equipment.

What's the strategy for hills?
If you're keen to incorporate hill running into your training, start slow by adding a few hill reps into the middle of an easy, short run. If you need to, take walking breaks and run on time, aiming for five, 30s intervals at first.

As you take on a hill, settle into a steady pace that allows you to keep moving forward without syphoning all your energy reserves. Breathe evenly through your nose and out through your mouth if you're able, and get into a rhythm. Your stride should be shorter than usual, with your knees driving higher to account for the hill. Use your arms to propel you forward and keep your gaze trained a few metres ahead and any obstacles in your path.

Your frame should be upright and open to allow for easy breathing, with either a straight or slight lean on the body. Too far forward though and you'll leave your hips with less space to stride onward, and too far back will make you off balance.

If your head, either have a time or distance goal for the hill effort and keep it short until you're used to hills and have started building your strength.

Hill running builds brilliant strength in the lower legs and cardiovascular system, which will pay dividends when it comes to running downhill and triathlon efforts.

NEO SLIX
LUUB
premax
ANTI FRICTION BALM FOR WOMEN
100% NATURAL GLIDE
LEAPING FISH
TRIATHLETES SKIN & SUIT LUBE
SKIN BALM
LIFEJACKET
ANTI-CHAFE BAR
HEAVY DUTY CHAFE AND BLISTER PREVENTION
DURABLE AND WEATHER RESISTANT

Q: I'M GETTING BAD CHAFING ON MY NECK AND UNDERARMS AFTER LONG WETSUIT SWIMS. WHAT CAN I DO?

Mark Pendennis

HELEN WEBSTER

220's Editor is also a qualified Level 2 Open-Water Swim Coach focusing on open-water confidence and cold water safety. She is also an RLSS UK Open Water Lifeguard trainer assessor.

A Ouch! There's nothing worse than chafing, so I don't blame you from wanting to get this sorted as soon as possible. As with running or cycling, chafing is caused by friction between your skin and the kit you are using, with areas where you find repetitive movements the worst.

In a wetsuit, areas susceptible tend to be around the neck where the wetsuit touches the delicate skin of the back and sides of your neck and the throat and where irritation can be caused by the regular head turns to breathe. It is also common under the arms, on wrists and ankles and sometimes between the legs. Your individual physiology as well as the type of wetsuit you have can make a difference.

Swimming in the sea can also cause chafing to be much worse, as the salty water creates an extra method of abrasion, so if you're usually a lake swimmer and don't usually suffer from chafing then beware if you go to swim at the coast as it may catch you out – this has happened to me before! The result of chafing is red, sore skin that can be raised and/or broken. Bad cases can weep (yep, gross!) and will open up again with repeated swims, leaving you at risk of infection.

The good news is, chafing is relatively simple to avoid by adding a lubricant to areas of your swim at risk before swimming. Various formulations and methods of application are available from creams to sticks to gels, plus choose from synthetic or more natural ingredients.

Personally, I like Leaping Fish Triathlete's Skin and Suit Lube, which comes in a little tin and is made from natural oils and waxes and includes tea tree oil, citronella and geranium to soothe the skin.

The other benefit of using a lube is it can make your wetsuit easier to remove, so as well as applying liberally to areas that chafe, rubbing it onto your shins, forearms and any other areas where your wetsuit can be tricky to remove will help!

One final word on chafing. If you're in the market for a new wetsuit, then consider comfort and where you usually chafe when replacing or upgrading your suit. Different suits have different types of neckline (rolled or cut) as well as different heights of neckline, so if your neck is a particular problem it can be worth trying a couple of different types of design. 220

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

THE NEED FOR SPEED

Racing a draft-legal event for the first time and seeded in the championship wave, can Michelle Farrow conquer the circuit at the Castle Combe Chilly Du?

WORDS MICHELLE FARROW **IMAGES** GAVIN PARISH, DAVID PERKS AND DB MAX

MEET MICHELLE

Michelle Farrow is a 25 year old veterinary researcher from Wiltshire. Michelle has competed in triathlon since 2018. She enjoys a range of different activities and events including Athx, Canicross (with her 3 spaniels and lab), CrossFit, Hyrox, SwimRun and much more – there isn't much she hasn't tried! Last year Michelle completed an Ironman 70.3 and this year is working towards the new Leeds Ironman in July.

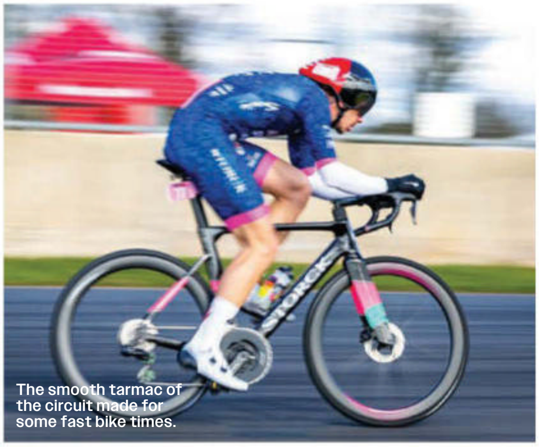
I decrease my speed and meticulously navigate the first chicane. A burst of energy helps power me out the other side and chase down my first target. My bottom lifts out of the seat as I drive the pedals round. The metres close, my heart is racing and I'm open-mouth breathing. Three, two, one… Our wheels are now within inches of each other. Now relax, settle the breathing and ride easy. Success! First victim acquired. Who knew draft legal racing could be so much fun?!

The sun is shining, and it is a crisp spring morning at the wonderful Castle Combe race circuit. The temperature is just above freezing, and I can see my breath drift into the air as I prepare my belongings and the all-important 'battle braids' – a race essential for long hair. It is a surreal moment for me and memories of watching my late grandfather race his Morgan on this very track come flooding back. Although duathlon is arguably very different to motor racing, there was no chance I could miss the opportunity to race at Combe and follow in his footsteps.

EYES ON THE PRIZE

This event is in support of my ongoing training for a full distance Iroman in the summer, my biggest event to date. I am early in my training and the distance of this duathlon is very much doable with a 5km run, 21km cycle and a 3km run to finish. Perhaps a little short for my liking due to my preference of longer endurance events (which negate the necessity for moving beyond zone 2!) however it presents an opportunity to practice transitions, do a much 'loved' brick training session and get outside to exercise with like-minded people. I often prefer to think of races as more of an adventure and chance to explore different environments, therefore a busy race event calendar supported by *220 Triathlon*'s training plans are keeping me committed and on track for the summer.

Not only is it in a sentimental location, but this sprint distance Duathlon is a 2026 World Duathlon Championships qualifier and is a rare draft legal event open to all levels of athlete. Whether you are looking to qualify for the GB team or coming in as a complete novice, everyone is welcome. I would consider myself somewhere in between those two groups… that being



The smooth tarmac of the circuit made for some fast bike times.

◄ Draft-legal racing was the order of the day at the Chilly Du.

said, due to my self-predicted finish time of 1 hour 30 minutes, I am considered just about quick enough to be in the women's championship wave – eek.

Of course, ladies first and we are the first of three waves this morning. Next is the men's qualifier wave and last but by no means least the larger 'open' wave. I'm walking around combe after racking my bike and preparing my transition area, and women are everywhere. This is such a novelty for me as I'm used to hoards of men at the start of triathlons so I am basking in the buzz these inspirational women are creating.

I can see some seasoned duathletes and overhear some nervous newbies, but my focus is quickly turned to those hungry to qualify for the GB team. The race director begins the briefing and it all feels very daunting, but my main aim is to have fun and use the experience as a training aid so I'm trying to relax. The race director announces you can only draft women in your age-group and there is uproar from the competitors. This is my first draft legal race and so this doesn't mean too much to me but it seems to make things pretty complicated and judging by everyone's reaction the majority are not pleased! The race director turns to the race officials, and they mutter amongst themselves. Women are reacting all around me, some are devastated. After some deliberation the race director returns and retracts his previous rule – you can now draft anyone on the same lap as you! The competitors cheer and sigh with relief.

With the race briefing coming to an end, we all eagerly walk to the start line. All bobbing about trying to keep warm. Music is filling the start line and now I just want to get started. A big countdown from 10… 3, 2, 1… GO! Flames blast out of the start line tunnel. I enjoy a brief moment of warmth and then we're off.

I now realise why this is the championship race – these ladies are speedy! Run your own race I keep saying to myself. It's only been a few minutes since the start and I already feel as though I'm at the back of the pack. I would say I'm a stronger cyclist than runner, but I'm not going to let that deter me. Stay calm and stick to the game plan.

I look at my watch – I'm running sub 5 minute kilometres, but the last thing I want to do is go out too hot. Ignoring the faster runners storming ahead, I look to the sky. What a beautiful morning and how lucky am I to be racing here. The track is smooth underfoot and little to no elevation – this is the dream. I maintain pace and go past a few runners. I am grateful for my sunglasses as I turn the corner, and the sun radiates in my face. Finally, I'm starting to warm up.

The circuit is approximately 3km long and so having done an out and back segment to begin with followed by completing a full lap of the circuit, I am back at the start, and it is time to head to transition. First, I strap ►

▼ Michelle (in pink) heads round the track on her second run of the race.

AVON
TYRES
ON ROAD, ON TRACK, ON AVON

DB MAX
SPORTS TIMING
TIMING & MULTISPORT EVENTS
FOSTER
GBR
2
179
26
63

Competition was fierce with age-group qualification on offer.

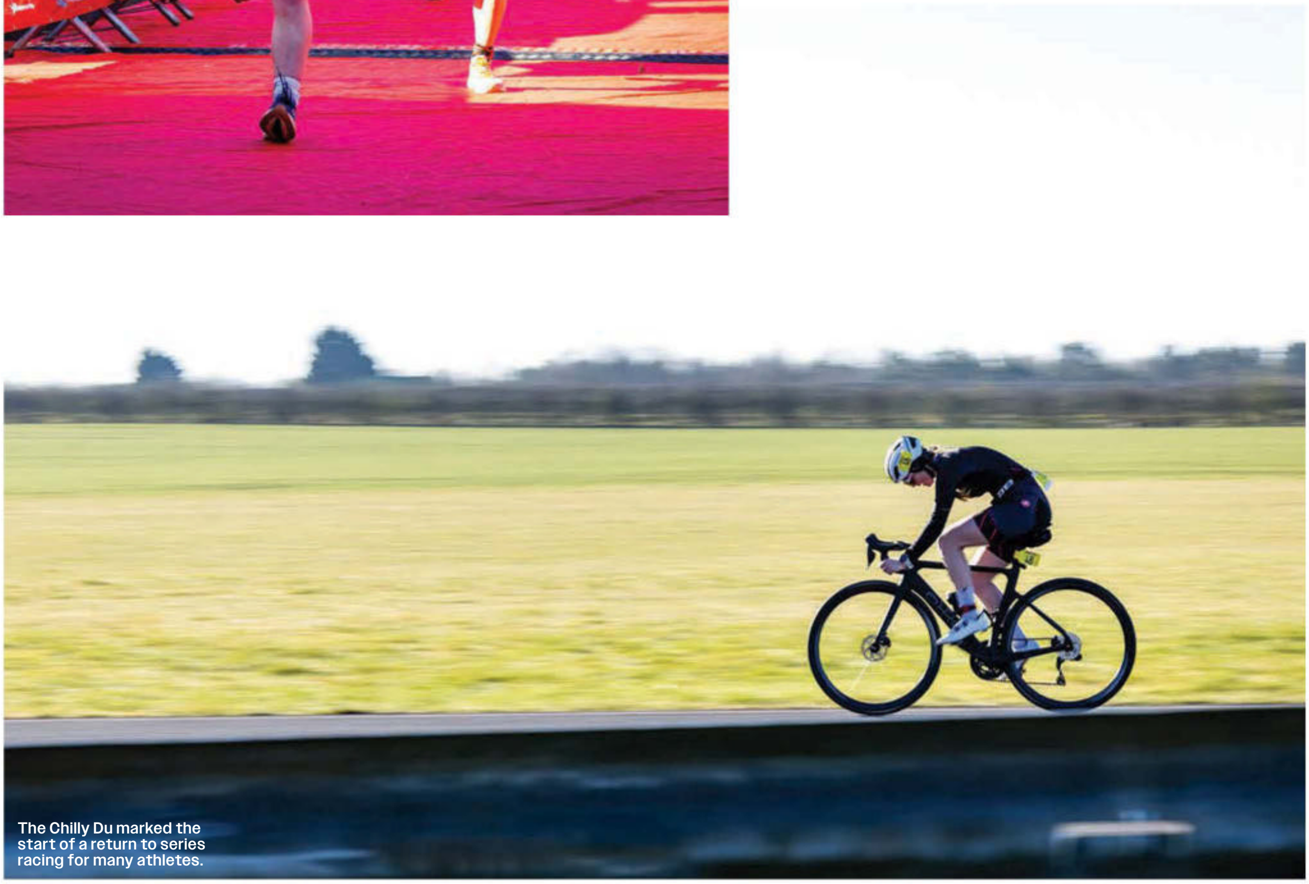
on my helmet and quickly put on my cycling shoes. As I'm debating whether to have a quick snack, a woman races past me out of transition drawing my attention quickly back to the race and with that I have found my first victim to draft. Let the games begin.

The cycle consists of seven laps of the circuit and so I use the first lap to recce the course and recover from the run. I sit comfortably on the wheel of my competitor for the first lap, until the first chicane. I jump at that opportunity to draft a faster competitor and comfortably settle down for another lap. I wave as I pass my friends, but the distraction costs me a few metres and I am now having to chase the wheel in front back down to close the gap and once again benefit from the draft. What a difference drafting makes! Why have I never done a draft legal event before? It is thrilling!

▼ Crossing the line in 1 hour 22 mins Michelle has put in a great performance.

RIDING THE DRAFT

Another group begins to overtake us, my competitive instincts take over and I find myself yet again chasing down that group in order to latch onto a faster wheel. At this point, I start questioning which lap I am on… is it 3 or 4? Suddenly I am feeling the pressure of having to count laps despite knowing the cycle segment is 21km and my Garmin watch telling me the distance. After working out I am on lap 4, my attention drives towards fuelling. Should I have some sweets or gels? My paranoia of needing the toilet on the final run sets in and I settle for a simple sip of water. From previous experience I know that I can last the duration of this duathlon without fuelling during the race. I am feeling good from a week of good sleep, batch cooked chicken, rice and vegetables, the infamous pre-race spaghetti bolognaise and the race morning banana and porridge. This should see me through, and I know I have a bacon butty waiting for me at the end!



The Chilly Du marked the start of a return to series racing for many athletes.

"My competitive instincts take over and I find myself chasing down the group"

▲ Michelle loved her first draft-legal race and will be back to do more!

As I enter my penultimate lap, I can feel the pace slowing and this is evident when I am overtaken by the first competitor I drafted. She's somehow managed to find a faster wheel to sit behind and has bought herself back into the game. Adamant to not be re-overtaken I sit behind her until the final lap where I decide to push on alone. Flippin' heck… I forgot how hard it is when you're not drafting. I can now appreciate the appeal and tactics of bike racing.

TIME TO RUN AGAIN

Finishing my final lap, I head to transition to rack my bike, and change my shoes again. Why didn't I untie my laces! The seconds painfully pass as I battle to put my trainers on and with that the competitor I had been battling with has yet again overtaken me. I whip off my jacket, now showing off my beautiful pink and white Tri-Fit triathlon suit in its full glory and sprint out of transition. I'm hot on her tail and the pace seems comfortable. We are now on the outskirts of the circuit and the terrain is mixed. I carefully watch my footing as I navigate an overtake. This will be the final time we pass each other I instruct myself and hold the pace. I gain confidence as I overtake more competitors but feel the pressure to maintain this pace.

My heart rate is elevating, and I am definitely approaching my threshold pace. With half a kilometre to go, now it's time to make things count. My strides lengthen and I'm starting to sprint. Just 100m and 3 other competitors stand between me and the finish. Time to go balls to the wall I tell myself. I power towards the finish line and manage to overtake them all. Hell yeah! That's what I call a successful sprint finish… Fun and adventure? Yes, but it looks like I found my competitive side today tooI I pause to catch my breath before collecting my medal. Nothing beats that post-event feeling. It is the best kind of high and so addictive.

I am already contemplating my next training event… it's got to be a draft legal bike race… bring on the Easter classic bike race again at Castle Combe's circuit! Reflecting on the race… How did it go? I smashed my target time finishing in 1 hour and 22 minutes! I finished 34/79 overall. My cycle and second run were my redeeming sections, whilst my transitions very much need some work as they were comparatively slow. To anyone thinking of doing a draft legal event – I highly recommend it, especially a traffic-free race. I had so much fun, and the tactical component of drafting really distracted me from a potential pain cave that may have presented in its absence. Race done, now where's that bacon butty..? 220

LET'S GO

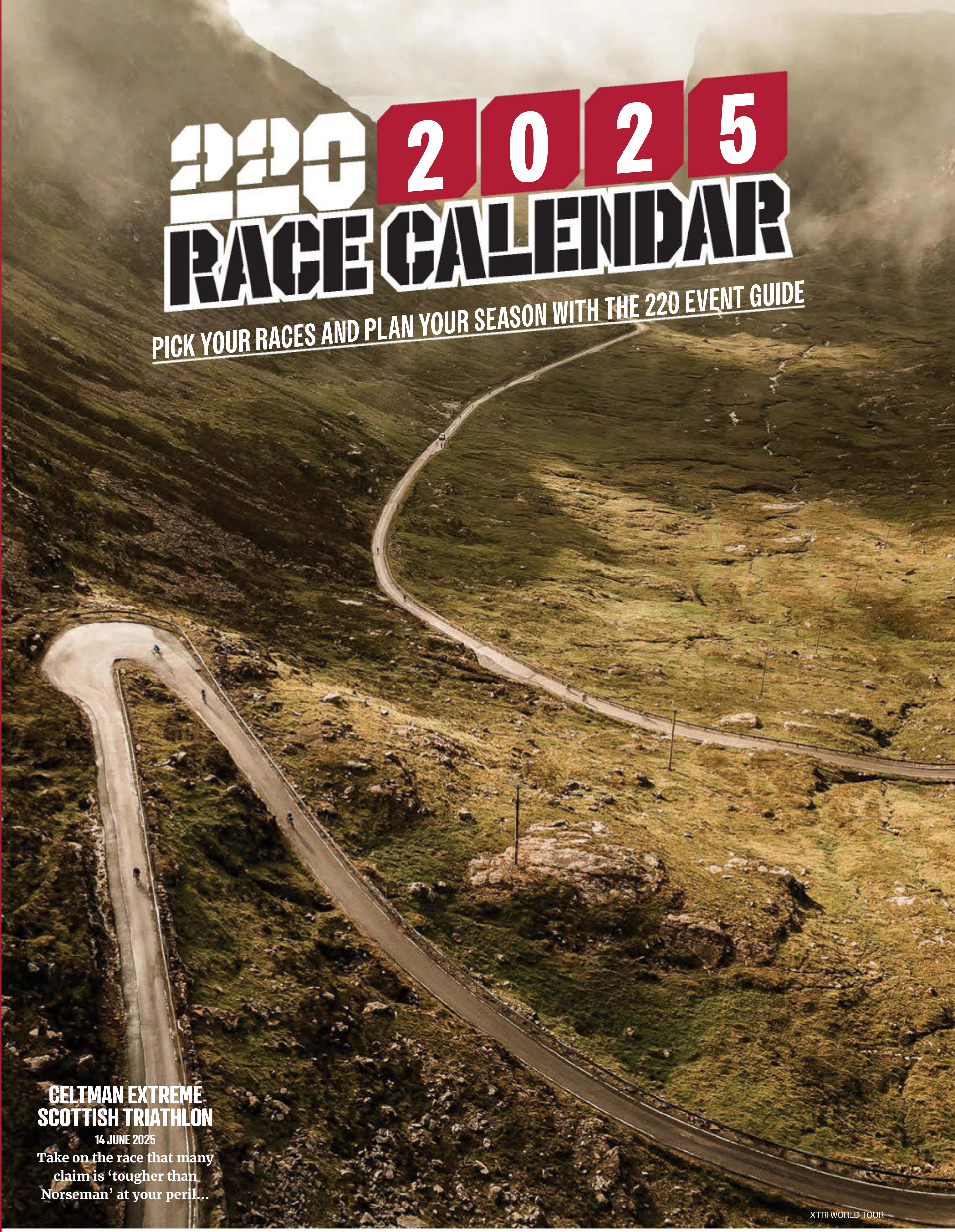
RACE WEBSITE
www.dbmax.co.uk

HOW TO GET THERE
Castle Combe Race Circuit is located in Wiltshire about a 20 minute drive from Chippenham. Access it via the M4 or jump in a taxi from either Chippenham or Bath train station.

WHERE TO STAY
The Manor House at Castle Combe is within minutes of the circuit and boast a beautiful spa perfect for pre- and post-race pampering.

220 2025 RACE CALENDAR

PICK YOUR RACES AND PLAN YOUR SEASON WITH THE 220 EVENT GUIDE



CELTMAN EXTREME SCOTTISH TRIATHLON

14 JUNE 2025

Take on the race that many claim is 'tougher than Norseman' at your peril…

XTRI WORLD TOUR

● EUROPEAN CHAMPS QUALIFIER ● WORLD CHAMPS QUALIFIER

APRIL

26 CLUMBER PARK DUATHLON (● STANDARD)
(various dists)
Clumber Park, East Midlands.
trisociety.co.uk

27 HARROGATE SPRINT TRI & AQUATHLON
(various dists & events)
Harrogate, North Yorks.
harrogatetriathlonclub.co.uk

RIBBY HALL TRIATHLON
(400m S/11m B/5km R)
Ribby Hall Holiday Village,
Nr. Preston, Lancashire
opevents.co.uk

BIG BOBBLE HATS BISHOPBRIGGS TRIATHLON
(various dists & events)
Bishopbriggs Leisuredome,
Glasgow. *entrycentral.com*

BLACK COUNTRY TRIATHLETES TRIATHLON
400m S/20kmB/5km R
Ounsdale Leisure Centre,
Ounsdale
Wolverhampton.
blackcountrytriathletes.com

CROWLE TRIATHLON SPRING EDITION
(various dists & events)
Axholme North leisure Centre,
Wharf Road
Scunthorpe
animisracing.com

HARROGATE SPRINT TRIATHLON AND JUNIOR AQUATHLON
(various dists & events)
Ashville College,
Harrogate,
North Yorkshire
harrogatetriathlonclub.co.uk

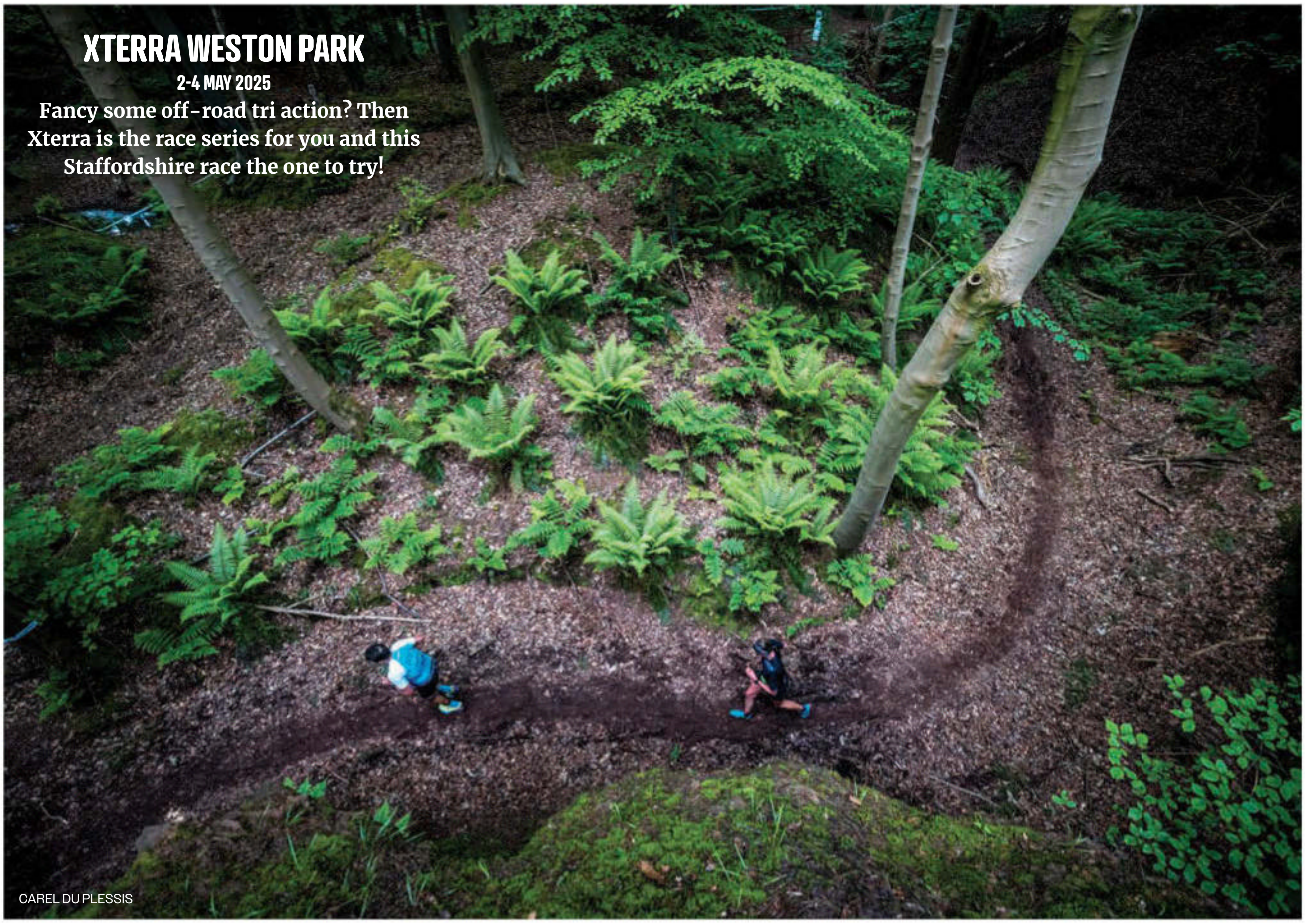
MAY

4 HORWICH TRIATHLON & DUATHLON
(various distances and events)
Horwich Leisure Centre, Bolton.
epicevents.co.uk

5 TADCASTER TRI
(various dists)
Tadcaster, North Yorks.
evensplits.events/tadtri

THAMES TURBO SPRINT TRIATHLON
(426m S/21.5km B/5km R)
Hampton Open Air Pool, London.
thamesturbo.co.uk

10 CHESHIRE KIDS FUN DUATHLON
(various dists)
Barony Park, Nantwich.
uktriathlon.co.uk



XTERRA WESTON PARK

2-4 MAY 2025

Fancy some off-road tri action? Then Xterra is the race series for you and this Staffordshire race the one to try!

CAREL DU PLESSIS

BLENHEIM PALACE TRIATHLON

7-8 JUNE 2025

One of the real classics in the UK tri calendar, this beautiful race is beginner-friendly too!

11 **EARLY BRIGG SPRINT TRIATHLON**
(400m S/20km B/5km R)
Ancholme Leisure Centre, Brigg, Lincs.
fastfwdsports.co.uk

EAST GRINSTEAD TRIATHLON
(various distances and events)
The Kings Centre, East Grinstead, West Sussex.
egtriclub.com/triathlon

ROYAL WOOTTON BASSETT SPRINT TRIATHLON
(400m S/20km B/5km R)
Lime Kiln Leisure Centre, Swindon, Wiltshire.
royalwoottonbassetthounds.co.uk

TELFORD TRIATHLON AND AQUATHLON
(various distances and events)
Much Wenlock Leisure Centre, Shropshire.
telfordtri.co.uk

CHESHIRE TRIATHLON
(various distances and events)
Barony Park, Nantwich.
uktriathlon.co.uk

17-18 **OUTLAW HALF NOTTINGHAM WEEKEND**
(🟢 SPRINT)
(various distances and events)
National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham. Nottinghamshire.
outlawtriathlon.com

18 **SOUTHPORT TRIATHLON AND DUATHLON**
(🟢 STANDARD TRIATHLON)
(various distances and events)
Waterside Lodge, Southport.
epicevents.co.uk

KNUTTY TRIATHLON
(sprint/supersprint with pool swim)
Knutsford, Cheshire
Knutsfordtriclub.co.uk/events

25 **DORNEY LAKE TRIATHLON**
(🔴 SPRINT)
(various distances)
Dorney Lake, Windsor, Berkshire.
dorneylakeevents.com

DARLEY MOOR MAY SPRINT DUATHLON
(🔴 SPRINT)
(4.8km R/18.3km B/2.4km R)
Darley Moor Race Track, Ashbourne, Derbyshire.
crazylegsevents.co.uk

31 **HENLEY KIDS FUN TRIATHLON**
(various dists)
Henley Leisure Centre, Oxfordshire.
uktriathlon.co.uk

HENLEY TRIATHLON
(various dists)
Henley Leisure Centre, Oxfordshire.
uktriathlon.co.uk

DEVA TRIATHLON
(🔴 AQUABIKE)
(various distances and events)
Grosvenor Park, Chester, Cheshire.
chestertri.org.uk

IRONMAN WALES/GETTY IMAGES

🟢 EUROPEAN CHAMPS QUALIFIER 🔴 WORLD CHAMPS QUALIFIER

JUNE

1 COVENTRY SPRINT TRIATHLON
(400m swim/20km B/5km R)
Xcel Leisure Centre, Coventry, West Midlands.
epicevents.co.uk

DEVA TRIATHLON (🔴 AQUABIKE)
(various distances and events)
Grosvenor Park, Chester, Cheshire.
chestertri.org.uk

7-8 NORTHUMBERLAND FESTIVAL OF SPORT
(various distances and events)
Druridge Bay Country Park, Morpeth, Northumberland.
vo2maxracingevents.co.uk

BLENHEIM PALACE TRIATHLON (🟢 SPRINT)
(various distances)
Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire.
blenheimtriathlon.com

8 EASTBOURNE TRIATHLON (🟢 STANDARD)
(various distances)
Eastbourne, East Sussex.
eastbournetriathlon.co.uk

IRONMAN 70.3 BOLTON
(1.9km S/90km B/21.1km R)
Bolton, Greater Manchester.
ironman.com

THE SLATEMAN TRIATHLON AND DUATHLON (🟢 STANDARD DUATHLON)
(various distance and events)
Llanberis, Wales.
alwaysaimhighevents.com

14 ALDERFORD KIDS FUN TRIATHLON
(various dists)
Alderford Lake, Whitchurch
uktriathlon.co.uk

ALDERFORD TRIATHLON
(various dists)
Alderford Lake, Whitchurch
uktriathlon.co.uk

22 CARDIFF TRIATHLON (🔴 STANDARD)
(various distances and events)
Cardiff Bay, Wales.
alwaysaimhighevents.com

29 ULTIMATE TRIATHLON
(full distance and relay)
The Mere, Ellesmere, Shropshire.
uktriathlon.co.uk

ULTIMATE HALF TRIATHLON
(half full distance and relay)
The Mere, Ellesmere, Shropshire.
uktriathlon.co.uk

ULTIMATE QUARTER TRIATHLON
(quarter full distance and relay)
The Mere, Ellesmere, Shropshire.
uktriathlon.co.uk

JULY

5-6 OUTLAW HALF HOLKHAM WEEKEND
(various distances and events)
Holkham Hall, Wells-next-the-sea, Norfolk.
outlawtriathlon.com

WOODHORN MUSEUM TRIATHLON (🔴 SPRINT)
(various distances and events)
Woodhorn Museum, Ashington, Northumberland
vo2maxracingevents.co.uk

6 CROYDE OCEAN TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Putsborough, Devon.
croydeocean.co.uk

12 ARTIC ONE TRI AND PARA-TRI FESTIVAL (🔴 AQUABIKE)
(various distances)
Dorney Lake, Windsor, Berkshire.
arctic1.co.uk

UPTON TRIATHLON AND DUATHLON (🔴 SPRINT DUATHLON)
(various distances)
Fish Meadow, Upton-upon-Severn, Worcs.
uptontriathlon.com

13 IRONMAN 70.3 SWANSEA
(1.9km S/90km B/21.1km R)
Swansea, Wales.
ironman.com

19 BIRMINGHAM TRIATHLON
(various dists)
Boldmere Gate, Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield.
uktriathlon.co.uk

19-20 BELVOIR CASTLE MULTISPORT FESTIVAL (🔴 STANDARD DUATHLON)
(various distances and events)
Belvoir Castle, Leicestershire.
castleraceseries.com

20 TRIBOURNE FESTIVAL OF ENDURANCE
(various distances)
Eastbourne, East Sussex.
140.6miles.co.uk

ORAVAMAN XTRI SOLO POINT FIVE

12 JULY 2025

Head to Slovakia for this half-distance event in the XTRI World Tour calendar for beautiful mountains, a dam swim and (maybe) the chance to see Norseman

ARIEL WOJCIECHOWSKI

SWEDEMAN XTREME TRIATHLON

5 JULY 2025

Stunning scenery starting with a swim under one of Europe's biggest waterfalls will (almost) take your mind off the mountains that follow…

ARIEL WOJCIECHOWSKI

● EUROPEAN CHAMPS QUALIFIER ● WORLD CHAMPS QUALIFIER

T100

HATHERSAGE HILLY TRIATHLON
(420m S/21k B/6k R)
Hathersage, Peak District
sheffieldtriclub.com/hilly

26-27 OUTLAW TRIATHLON WEEKEND
(various distances and events)
National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham. Nottinghamshire.
outlawtriathlon.com

27 IRONMAN LEEDS
(3.8km S/180km b/42.2km R)
Leeds, Yorkshire.
ironman.com

ETON DORNEY SPRINT TRIATHLON
(🟢SPRINT)
(750m S/20km B/5km R)
Dorney Lake, Windsor, Berkshire.
dbmax.co.uk

AUGUST

16 YORK KIDS FUN TRIATHLON
(various dists)
York Sports Village, York.
uktriathlon.co.uk

17 BLITHFIELD TRIATHLON
(🔴AQUABIKE)
(various distances and events)
Blithfield Reservoir Staffordshire.
pma-racing.co.uk

YORK TRIATHLON
(various dists)
York Sports Village, York.
uktriathlon.co.uk

31 SHROPSHIRE TRIATHLON
(various dists)
The Mere, Cremorne Gardens, Ellesmere.
uktriathlon.co.uk

SHROPSHIRE MIDDLE DISTANCE
(middle distance)
The Mere, Cremorne Gardens, Ellesmere.
uktriathlon.co.uk

BRIGHTON AND HOVE TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Hove Lawns, Brighton.
brightonandhovetriathlon.com

SEPTEMBER

7 SWYD SPRINT TRIATHLON
(🔴SPRINT)
(750m S/20km B/5km R)
Barry Island, Wales.
allornothingevents.com

FLEET FEET TRIATHLETES
(🔴STANDARD)
(1.5km S/42km B/10km R)
Knockburn Loch, Aberdeen, Scotland.
fleet-feet.com

NEWBURY TRIATHLON
(300m S (pool)/22km B/5km R)
Newbury.
triathlon@newburyvelo.cc

13 NORTH WEST KIDS FUN DUATHLON
(various distances)
Barony Park, Nantwich
.uktriathlon.co.uk

14 IRONMAN 70.3 WEYMOUTH
(1900m S/90km b/21.1km R)
Weymouth, Dorset.
ironman.com

CHELTENHAM TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Sandford Parks Lido, Cheltenham, Glos.
sandfordparkslido.org

NORTH WEST TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Barony Park, Nantwich
uktriathlon.co.uk

21 IRONMAN WALES
(3.8km S/180km b/42.2km R)
Tenby, Wales.
ironman.com

28 HEVER CASTLE TRIATHLON AND MULTISPORT FESTIVAL
(🔴STANDARD TRI)
(various dists)
Hever Castle, Kent.
castleraceseries.com

SALCOMBE GIN SPRINT TRIATHLON
(700m S/19km B/3km R)
Salcombe, Devon.
letsgovelo.co.uk

WARWICKSHIRE TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Stratford Leisure Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.
uktriathlon.co.uk

STOCKPORT TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Poynton Leisure Centre, Stockport.
stockporttriclub.co.uk

OCTOBER

5 THRUXTON MASS ATTACK DUATHLON
(🟢SPRINT)
(various distances) Thruxton Motor Circuit, Hants.
challenging.events

19 OULTON PARK DUATHLON
(🟢STANDARD)
(various dists)
Oulton Park Race Track, Little Budworth, Cheshire.
opevents.co.uk

NOVEMBER

2 DEVON DUATHLON
(🔴STANDARD)
(various distances)
Roadford Lake, Broadwoodwidger, Devon.
sportivaevents.co.uk

9 DORNEY DUATHLON
(various distances)
Dorney Lake, Windsor.
atwevents.co.uk

WANT TO LIST YOUR 2025 RACE(S) IN THE NEXT ISSUE?

Simply email **helen.webster@kelsey.co.uk** with the event name, date, distance on offer (write 'various dists' and/or 'and events' if multiple), location (venue, nearest town and county) and the website.

HOW CAN I SET UP MY SADDLE CORRECTLY?

FAQ Comfort while you ride is essential, but many people's seating set-up can do a race and body damage. And while it's a pretty simple job mechanically, there's still a fair amount of patient experimentation involved in getting it right. Make one small change at a time and keep a note of what it was. It can take a while for your body to adapt, so again give it time to see if the new set-up works.

SADDLE HEIGHT

Sit on your bike as though riding it.

- Loosen the bolt(s) that clamp the seatpost into the frame. Be careful when re-tightening – it's easy to strip an alloy thread with a steel bolt.
- Sit on your bike and put your heel on the pedal when it's at its lowest point in the stroke. Your leg should be almost fully straight. Adjust the height accordingly.
- When the position feels right, get a tape measure and check the distance from centre of the bottom-bracket axle to top of the saddle. Make a note of the distance for the next time you set up your bike.

FORE/AFT ADJUSTMENT

Aim for a position that puts your knee directly above the pedal when it's horizontal and pointing forward.

- Loosen the seat-clamp bolt. If it's been tight for a while, the clamp itself may need a tap to loosen it from the rails. Don't alter the angle now or this will confuse proceedings.
- Moving the saddle forwards reduces reach to the bars and steepens the effective seat tube angle, making it easier to get aero. Sliding it back increases reach but makes getting aero harder.
- Make a note of the distance between the saddle's nose and the stem cap bolt, so if you swap bikes you can reset your position quickly.

SADDLE TILT

You now need to get your saddle in the right position in relation to you.

- On a single-bolt seatpost you need to undo the bolt and tilt the cradle on its arch. With twin-bolts you need to loosen one as you tighten the other.
- Tilting the nose down reduces pressure on your sensitive bits, especially when in an aero tuck. But too much forward slope can cause soreness and shoulder ache.
- The nose-up position is popular with BMXers but there's no place for it in tri. It causes a lot more pressure exactly where you don't want it.
- A standard slim-padded flat saddle can render your tenders red raw, so tilt it down a little. A tri-saddle with a soft nose will let you run it level while remaining comfortable.

BODY GEOMETRY
oura

THE SECRET STUDIO

TRI SPEAK

Wondering what the 'washing machine' is, or where to find your M-dot?! Make things easy with our guide to common tri terms...

'A'-Race The most important race of your season

Age-grouper Non-pro triathlete

Aerobic Aerobic exercise involves oxygen consumption by the body

Anaerobic How much energy your body can produce without using oxygen

Aquabike Race with just swim and bike elements, no run

Bilateral breathing Breathing every three strokes when swimming

Biomechanics The forces applied to your body during exercise

Bonking Running out of energy mid-race or training session

Brick session When you 'brick' two disciplines together, e.g. bike and run

Cadence Pedal rate on bike, in revolutions per minute (rpm)

Carb-loading Eating a carb-heavy meal prior to a race to boost energy

Catch The part of the swim stroke where you pull on the water

Core strength Development of the stomach and lower back area in support of strength

DNS/DNF Did not start, did not finish – abbreviations found in race results

DOMS Delayed onset muscle soreness (after racing or training)

DQ Disqualified, abbreviation in race results

Drafting Hitching a ride on someone else's slipstream in the bike or swim

Drag The amount of turbulent displaced air that an object creates, resulting in a slowing effect

Duathlon Usually a run/bike/run

Electrolyte drink Contains sodium and potassium to help your body hydrate

Elite Another word for a professional athlete

Glycemic index A ranking system for carbohydrates based on their effect on blood glucose levels

HIT High-intensity training

HRmax Your maximum heart rate. Occurs when digging deep!

Hyponatremia A deficiency of sodium found in the blood

Intervals Intensive training using repeated on/off efforts

Kona Place in Hawaii where Ironman World championships are held every October

Lactic acid Produced in high-intensity workouts, it can inhibit oxygen movement around the body and slow you down

DANIEL JAMES MEDIA

Low glycogen training Training without taking on carbohydrates to increase the body's ability to burn fat

Main set A block lasting 40-50% of a session where the heart rate is elevate.d

M-dot Abbreviation for the Ironman logo

Midfoot strike When running, your front foot strikes the ground flat – as opposed to toe or heel first

Muscular endurance Your muscles' ability to produce a given level of force for an extended duration

Negative split Completing the second part, e.g a run lap, faster than the first

Overpronation Foot rolls inwards on impact rather than outwards

Overtraining Common symptoms of training too much with inefficient recovery include insomnia, headaches, moodiness, loss of enthusiasm, and increased illness due to a suppressed immune system

PB Personal best

Pronation The natural 'turning in' of the foot

Power output Measured in watts on your bike

Pull The mid part of the swim stroke where the hands and arms accelerate using the purchase from the catch

Reps Pre-fixed distances covered and pre-fixed recoveries maintained

Rest interval (RI) Period of rest between reps

Sculling Swim drills that use your hands alone to propel you forward through the water

Sighting Looking ahead/at an object while swimming to keep on course

Swimrun Partner race where you do multiple swims and runs

T1/T2 Abbreviation for 'Transition 1' (swim to bike) and 'Transition 2' (bike to run)

Taper Reducing your training in the days just before your race

Tempo effort Challenging, sustainable effort

Threshold run A run at about 80% of your max heart rate for no more than 20mins

Time trials A set-distance session, where the aim is to swim, bike or run as fast as you can over the distance

Transition area The place where you rack your bike and swap kit between disciplines

Tri-bars Also known as aerobars, they help you race aerodynamically

Tumble turn Fast way of turning at the pool wall by performing a forward roll, push off and a twist to return to the initial stroke position

Turbo trainer A frame that attaches to your bike, turning it into a static trainer

Underpronation When your foot rolls outwards on impact

VO2 max A measure of the body's maximal ability to use oxygen to produce energy

Washing machine Way to refer to a chaotic swim start!

Watt (w) The unit of measure in which power is expressed

Waves The groups which triathletes are put in to start a race

MAXIMUM
20
km/h

GETTY IMAGES

WEEKEND WARRIOR

TOO FAST? CHANCE WOULD BE A FINE THING…

With a pro athlete recently DQ'd for going too fast on the bike, Brunty wonders whether this is something that would ever bother mere mortals…

MARTYN BRUNT

Martyn is tri's foremost average athlete and is living proof that hours of training and endless new kit are no substitute for ability.

I note with interest that Aussie elite triathlete Cam Wurf was recently disqualified from a triathlon for going too fast. Like most age-groupers reading that my immediate thought was "chance would be a fine thing". Most of us are probably more concerned with being disqualified for going too slowly.

In fairness despite my best efforts I have yet to be DQ'd for not being fast enough, although I remember knowing how it feels during the Superman Triathlon Vlaanderen in Belgium after cycling cross-eyed with effort into a headwind to stay ahead of the broom wagon down a succession of flat, narrow lanes. I've never forgotten the feeling of doom as the van finally had enough room to overtake me, only to then discover it was actually a support van for a para triathlete and I had been stopping them from getting past to reach him.

Being disqualified has actually happened to my friend Tony though, who was within 500 metres of the finish of a race in Almere in the Netherlands when the cut-off time ticked over and they booted him off the course rather than let him cross the line (I'd like to say we were sympathetic to him but we were too busy laughing).

Anyway, back to Cam Wurf, who fell foul of the commissaires at the Oceanside 70.3 in California, and it seems this is a regular thing at this race because there's one section of the course where there is a speed limit. Poor old Cam was about a minute down after the swim but, as befits a former pro cyclist with Ineos Grenadiers, was making up time on the bike when he was clobbered by a speed trap, after which it was a red card and an early bath for him. By all accounts he's by no means the first to be done for speeding at this spot on the course, with Jenson Button being another high-profile victim, although in his case I'm tempted to say "what do you expect?".

I've yet to discover whether Wurf's punishment was a £100 fine and three points on his UCI licence, or a three-hour training course on stopping distances and being able to tell the speed limit from the presence of lamp posts, in a room full of surly middle-aged sales reps (yes, I have recently had to do the speed awareness course, okay!).

I have done a few triathlons where there have been speed limits as we go through villages etc but to be honest they have never troubled me because I look upon 30mph as some kind of mystical target speed that I will never achieve rather than something that would ever involve me applying my brakes. Even in Wales where 20mph limits are now in place it has never affected me because, being Wales, the village in question is always at the top of a massive hill. To be honest I'd consider it a win if my speed got up into double figures.

I completely get why some races may need to have speed limits for safety reasons though, especially when passing through villages or places shared with pedestrians etc and, being responsible adults and representatives of a sport we love and want to encourage others to love too, we should of course obey them. Speeding is not cool whether we're on a bike, in a car or, for example, in a van and being done by a mobile speed camera because you were distracted by listening to loud punk music.

One final thing while we're talking about the Oceanside 70.3 race though, is that from the race report I saw that apparently Kristian Blummenfelt lost almost 15 minutes on the bike after getting a puncture. Now, I don't wish to get all cocky with a former Olympic champion, but 15 minutes to change a tube is a frankly shocking performance, and is the kind of thing that would earn widespread derision from the other cyclists on any cycling club ride. Work to do Kristian old son, work to do… **220**

> *"The former pro cyclist was making up time and was clobbered by a speed trap"*

High protein sausages?
Sorted!
THE GYM KITCHEN
FOOD TO FUEL
HIGH PROTEIN
ORIGINAL CHICKEN SAUSAGES
17g PROTEIN*
*17g protein per 2 Sausages
THE GYM KITCHEN
FOOD TO FUEL
HIGH PROTEIN
PIRI PIRI CHICKEN SAUSAGES
18g PROTEIN*
THE GYM KITCHEN
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★★★★½ RATED BY 220

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